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Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund

Report on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2014

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Part one
First regular session of 2014

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 4 to 7 February 2014

I. Organization of the session

A. Election of officers of the Executive Board

1. The Executive Board elected as President Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations; and as Vice-Presidents, the following Permanent Representatives to the United Nations: Stephan Tafrov (Bulgaria), Ib Peterson (Denmark), Denis Régis (Haiti) and Masood Khan (Pakistan).

B. Opening statements by the President and Executive Director

2. The President of the Executive Board said it was an honour and great pleasure to serve as President for 2014 and to work with the new Bureau members and UNICEF secretariat. He noted that, as a champion of the focus on equity, UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake was a true friend of the poor, the marginalized, the unreached, the victims of conflicts and disasters and all others whose rights have been trampled or ignored or who have been denied equal opportunity.

3. Speaking on behalf of the Executive Board, he expressed shock and sadness at the loss of life of two UNICEF staff members to the attacks on civilians in Kabul on 17 January. It was a tragic reminder that many UNICEF staff members work under difficult and risky conditions to carry out the organization's mission for children.

4. He said that the year 2014 was an important one for UNICEF, children around the world and the entire United Nations system. It was the year of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a milestone for human rights. It was the first year of implementation of the UNICEF strategic plan and integrated budget, 2014-2017. It was also the year in which the foundation was being laid for the post-2015 agenda, with ongoing work being accomplished by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

5. The post-2015 landscape promised significant changes for international multilateral development. UNICEF would be challenged to do what it does best: innovate, restructure and lead, and do so in a manner that provides maximum impact to the lives of children, while giving full value to the billions of dollars of investment the organization receives.

6. The principles, duties and functions of the Executive Board may also need to change. The Board must be nimble and agile enough to meet the demands of the twenty-first century in seeking to transform opportunities for children.

7. Equally significant, 2014 was also the penultimate year in the countdown to achieving the 2015 Millennium Development Goals and related national goals. Time was of the essence in working with partners to reduce the gaps and accelerate action. One of the most important partners in that work was the European Union, which had been a major source of backing of UNICEF programmes and humanitarian work. The collaboration between the two organizations had focused on crucial issues for development, including nutrition, health, education, child protection, water and sanitation and justice for children. The Executive Board was fortunate today to be able to take part in a special focus session on that growing

partnership and to hear the views of the distinguished guest speaker, the Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs.

8. Partnerships with Governments, the private sector and civil society were essential for the work of UNICEF. Partnerships with members of the United Nations system were equally essential to encouraging coherent United Nations action. It had been gratifying to learn that UNICEF was moving ahead with simplification and harmonization efforts in the spirit of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. In that spirit, UNICEF had worked with other agencies on a harmonized proposal for modifying the presentation and approval of country programme documentation, which would be discussed during the first regular session.

9. This was a critical juncture for children, as work wrapped up on the Millennium Development Goals while it began on the post-2015 agenda. It was crucial for Executive Board members to work together on that. They must use their significant influence as decision-makers and spokespersons to strive to create a world in which every child was reached with the benefits society had to offer.

10. The Executive Director of UNICEF began his opening statement with a tribute to UNICEF staff members Nasreen Khan and Basra Hassan, who lost their lives in Kabul. They should be remembered for the people they helped, for the young lives they saved in Afghanistan and elsewhere and for their passion for serving others. At his request, those in the conference room maintained a moment of silence in honour of the two women.

11. He thanked the outgoing President and members of the Bureau who had served in 2013, noting that their strong leadership had led to the year's many accomplishments, and he welcomed the new President and Bureau.

12. The goal of achieving results for children, he said, had driven the work on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, coherence, the results-based monitoring framework, the consolidation of support services for country programmes and other improvements in effectiveness and cost-efficiency.

13. That work was mirrored internally in the Efficiency and Effectiveness Initiative of UNICEF, including the recent launch of a two-year process to form a single, integrated global shared service centre for business transactions.

14. Turning to the area of partnerships, he emphasized the crucial contribution of donors, which had largely been made possible by the work of the 36 National Committees for UNICEF. Increasing efforts were being made to expand support among emerging economies.

15. One of the strongest partners of UNICEF, the European Union, would be spotlighted in a special focus session. The European Union should be commended for being a leading actor in the protection of children, supporting not only relief efforts, but also the creation of the long-term conditions necessary to build a better future for children. The European Union was one of the largest donors to UNICEF, contributing 320 million euros for health and nutrition programmes, and one of its closest partners in the field.

16. He emphasized that protection of children from violence, abuse and neglect, which was not part of the Millennium Development Goals, was not receiving the attention it deserved. Fortunately, the post-2015 agenda presented an opportunity to

correct that. There were a number of opportunities and challenges to address in that regard. To begin with, child protection must be part of all programme areas. Second, it must involve long-term change, helping Governments to adopt child-friendly laws and policies. Third, it must pay special attention to children in emergencies, conflicts and natural disasters. That was an inherent part of rebuilding and building stable and resilient nations. It included the recently launched initiative No Lost Generation for the children of the Syrian Arab Republic. Fourth, it must involve innovation such as the short message service-based Rapid Family Tracing and Reunification initiative of UNICEF. The formation of the UNICEF innovation centre in Nairobi would aim to lead in such efforts and share knowledge. Fifth, partnerships and broader movements could multiply the influence of those working for children's rights.

17. Having reliable data was essential in all these areas, especially in addressing unequal access to services and protection, as was emphasized in the *State of the World's Children* data report recently issued by UNICEF.

18. He said that social movements like the End child violence campaign were crucial to creating a lasting impact, and he invited delegations to join the campaign. Many did so at the session, having their hand stamped with a campaign logo and their photograph taken. That and other information was shared through social media.

19. Responding to the statements, nearly all delegations expressed their condolences for the loss of lives of the two UNICEF staff members and others in the 17 January attack in Kabul.

20. Strong support was expressed for child protection and efforts to end violence against children, especially in humanitarian situations. Expressing alarm at the high levels of sexual violence against children in emergencies, one delegation welcomed the commitment of UNICEF to strengthen its capacity and its leadership in protecting children from gender-based violence. It was emphasized that child protection should be a strategic priority in the post-2015 agenda.

21. A delegation pointed to the strong correlation between poverty and child abuse and exploitation, and echoed the views of several delegations in saying that efforts should involve greater investment in building and strengthening child protection systems. Another delegation commented that the approach to child protection required a gender perspective.

22. Support was also expressed for the leading role UNICEF had played in innovation, which was essential for improving the delivery of services and child protection.

23. Several delegations noted the great deal of work yet to be done in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, underscoring that the unfinished business in addressing the Goals needed to figure prominently in the post-2015 development agenda. One delegation highlighted especially the lack of progress on many Goals in Africa, recommending that more attention be paid to disparity in progress on the Goals and to child survival, to under-five and maternal mortality, and to HIV/AIDS, including mother-to-child transmission, among other issues. One speaker underlined the importance of the initiative A Promise Renewed.

24. UNICEF was praised for its work in developing the sustainable development goals as part of the post-2015 agenda. Delegations underscored the importance of

addressing inequality in the agenda, with one saying that "Leave no child behind" must be one of its central tenets. That was in keeping with the strategic plan, which aimed to realize the rights of every child, including the most disadvantaged.

25. Expressing support for the strategic plan, 2014-2017, one delegation advised that its implementation should be better aligned with the strategic priorities and planning of programme countries. In the implementation of the plan, more attention should be paid to assessing the needs and challenges of least developed countries and African countries.

26. Another noted the strong persistence of inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean region, which hobbled efforts to eradicate poverty. The delegation urged UNICEF to support and implement strategies and programmes aimed at overcoming the particular development challenges of middle-income countries, and, along with other delegations, underlined the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation. Another delegation requested that more attention to be paid to the situation of adolescent girls, stressing that it was a human rights imperative.

27. Several delegations welcomed the strengthening of humanitarian action, including through the Strengthening Humanitarian Action initiative. One commended UNICEF for its contribution to the collective humanitarian response and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee transformative agenda. Strong support was expressed for the recent work of UNICEF in emergencies, especially in the Syrian crisis, including through No Lost Generation, and in the Central African Republic. Tribute was paid to the courage and excellent work of UNICEF staff in those emergencies.

28. On the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, a delegation recognized the critical role of UNICEF in helping to produce the Integrated Monitoring and Reporting Framework for its implementation. UNICEF was requested to strengthen its commitment to United Nations system-wide coherence and cooperation with other agencies on the ground.

29. Regarding specific items on the agenda of the first regular session, a number of delegations welcomed the development of the new Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017. Speaking on the 2014 workplan of private fundraising, one delegation expressed support for the plan, especially its focus on markets with the highest growth potential.

30. One delegation proposed that UNICEF organize a special event to consider the achievement and challenges regarding the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with the participation of relevant stakeholders; that topic should be added to the global thematic evaluations for the period 2014-2017.

31. In response, the Executive Director said that, by addressing child abuse, investing in human security and in the social sector, poverty would be reduced. Investments in the health, well-being and protection of children are drivers of growth. He emphasized that UNICEF had a universal mandate, to work in all countries, no matter the income level, to support the rights of every child, including the most disadvantaged and those with disabilities.

C. Adoption of the agenda

32. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2014/1) for the session.

33. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 39 observer delegations, including 11 international organizations and 4 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 8 National Committees for UNICEF.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Oral report on UNICEF follow-up to recommendations and decisions of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinating Board meetings

34. Following introductory remarks by the Director of Programmes, the Associate Director for HIV/AIDS presented the report.

35. Delegations welcomed the commitment of UNICEF to an AIDS-free generation and commended its efforts to harmonize its HIV/AIDS programming with that of other United Nations agencies through the UNAIDS joint programme and division of labour. They encouraged UNICEF to continue to champion children's access to evidence-based HIV prevention and treatment, and to make sure the unique vulnerabilities and needs of children affected by AIDS, especially priority issues related to adolescents, were addressed in the UNAIDS investment approach. Some noted the importance of the investment approach for realizing the UNAIDS strategy, 2011-2015, as it promised to streamline interventions and planning processes by multilateral and bilateral donors, encourage country ownership and enhance sustainability. Others wanted to know more about the role of a smaller UNAIDS secretariat, as proposed within the emerging post-2015 development architecture.

36. Some noted with concern the low treatment coverage for children and urged UNICEF to work with other UNAIDS co-sponsors and stakeholders towards meeting the global targets of providing antiretroviral therapy for all HIV-infected children. Others, commending its leadership in global elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, encouraged UNICEF to continue efforts to address barriers to access and treatment for pregnant women living with HIV and to engage with communities to promote HIV testing. Some, noting with concern that AIDS-related deaths among adolescents had increased, while the overall number of deaths had dropped by 30 per cent since 2005, urged UNICEF to involve youth in planning and implementation of HIV and AIDS programmes, particularly where they were a key target group. Others noted the inequitable gender dimension of AIDS, with women and girls still facing an unacceptably high risk of HIV, and pointed to the successes of integrated HIV programming across other sectors such as health, nutrition, education and protection. They asked to learn more about the organization's strategy to sustainably fund its HIV/AIDS programming areas.

37. In response, the Associate Director acknowledged that while HIV and paediatric treatment was a component of the global plan to eliminate mother-to-

child transmission, it had not received as much attention in 2012 and 2013, as had efforts to expand routine testing of pregnant women and linkage to care and treatment for those found to be HIV-positive. He said it was important to support countries with high HIV prevalence to align child survival with paediatric AIDS programmes, linking HIV testing of children exposed to AIDS to immunization, nutrition and health-care programmes for children. That, he said, was the essence of the double dividend approach.

38. He noted that a key focus of next steps on adolescent HIV programming involved engaging with young people and Governments around policies that currently restrict access to testing. He cited the example of South Africa, where the age of consent for HIV testing had recently been reduced to 12 years. Affirming that the key role of UNAIDS around coordination, resource mobilization and advocacy on HIV and AIDS would continue within the post-2015 agenda, he stressed that HIV/AIDS remained a core priority in the strategic plan of UNICEF.

39. He highlighted the organization's resource mobilization efforts for HIV, including through private fundraising together with the National Committees, and said that at a later stage senior management would brief the Executive Board on the overall strategy for funding the HIV programme.

B. UNICEF programme cooperation

(a) Approval of revised country programme and area programme documents discussed at the second regular session 2013

40. In accordance with Executive Board decisions 2002/4, 2006/19 and 2008/17, the Executive Board approved, on a no-objection basis, the revised country programme and area programme documents for Mexico, Namibia and the Gulf Area subregional programme.

41. The representative of Mexico welcomed the adoption of the country programme, which she said would contribute to improving the living conditions of boys and girls and strengthen mechanisms to realize their rights. She highlighted efforts to identify and deal with inequities and to improve systems for the protection of children. Development of the programme gave special attention to the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to which Mexico had greatly enhanced its reporting. She concluded by praising the work of UNICEF in Mexico, especially regarding the protection of children's rights and the Joint United Nations Programme on the Prevention of Gender Violence in Indigenous Communities in two states.

(b) Modifications to procedures for consideration and approval of country programme documentation

42. Following introductory remarks by the Deputy Executive Director for Programmes, the Director of Policy and Strategy presented the proposal (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.1).

43. He thanked Member States that had put so much work into the issue. The modified procedure, he said, would make the following improvements: (a) help programme countries to reduce the time spent on planning at the expense of implementation; (b) facilitate simultaneous review of country programme

documents of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP); and, most importantly, (c) increase the focus on specific results for children to be achieved by UNICEF through the emphasis on the integrated results and resources framework. Under the new system, the proposed results would, for the first time, be linked to the proposed allocation of resources.

44. Emphasizing that the Executive Board would be given ample time to review and comment on country programme documents before they were submitted for approval, he also said that UNICEF would organize informal consultations on specific country programme documents if requested and facilitate any face-to-face discussions needed. UNICEF would also work with the Bureau to agree on a mechanism by which comments from individual Member States on draft country programme documents would be shared with the Executive Board as a whole.

45. All delegations who spoke welcomed the proposal and commended UNICEF for its efforts in developing it. They noted the following positive elements of the proposed modification: (a) the strengthened national ownership of the process, including the timing of the submission of documents in line with national planning and priorities; (b) a harmonized and simplified approach in line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review; (c) better tracking of the contribution of UNICEF to results for children; and (d) compliance with the UNICEF strategic plan and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

46. A number of delegations underlined the need for an adequate and open process of review by the Executive Board members, with comments shared among members before approval. One delegation said that was important in order to avoid a potential lack of transparency.

47. Some recommended that country programme documents be even more harmonized among the United Nations funds and programmes, with one group saying that they would have welcomed a joint proposal on that topic. Another delegation said it was a crucial step forward in the inter-agency programming process.

48. It was further recommended that UNICEF clearly articulate the accountability line to achieve programme results among programme managers, country representatives, regional offices and headquarters.

49. One group of delegations requested that specific items be included as part of country programme documentation (see decision 2014/1). One speaker requested that the country programme documents be translated into the official United Nations languages, as appropriate.

50. In response, the Director of Policy and Strategy took note of all of the comments. He said that the new proposal, if adopted, would not be in place by the annual session of 2014, in June, but most likely would be implemented by the second regular session of 2014, in September. UNICEF looked forward to working with Executive Board members on the process for ensuring adequate review and commenting by the Board.

51. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/1 (see annex III).

C. Costed UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017

52. Following introductory remarks by the Deputy Executive Director of Programmes, the Principal Adviser for Gender presented the plan (E/ICEF/2014/5).

53. Delegations welcomed the update on the plan and the consultative manner in which it was being developed, including Member States and other United Nations agencies. Several said they looked forward to further consultations with the Executive Board and the discussion of the final draft at the annual session. One delegation commented that it had hoped the work would be further advanced at this stage.

54. The plan was praised for its dual approach of targeted efforts and gender mainstreaming, aligned with the strategic plan. Many called it a major step forward by UNICEF in advancing gender equality, particularly in view of the emerging post-2015 development agenda. Some asked for further clarification on time frames and the 15 per cent funding benchmark for developing capacity and resources for the plan.

55. Noting that gender inequality was a fundamental form of disparity in child well-being, delegates stressed that a strong gender focus in the results and resources framework was key to realizing children's rights. They encouraged UNICEF to develop clear indicators, as well as monitoring of expenditures, so that gender bottlenecks and barriers could be overcome in implementing the plan. Some welcomed the fact that it would foster institutional accountability for gender performance within UNICEF and help countries to develop a gender perspective into their national plans. Others noted with appreciation the gender-focused thematic funding and requested further information on that.

56. Numerous delegations commended the proposed targeted initiatives (girls' secondary education; early marriage; gender and adolescent health). In addition, one proposed that the plan give attention to combating violence against young women and girls. It was noted in particular that the focus on adolescents, a relatively neglected area in development, would benefit from collaboration and joint efforts with other United Nations agencies. Some emphasized the importance of the issue of teenage pregnancy. It was key to focus also on boys, as established gender norms reflected power relations hindered the empowerment of girls and women.

57. Others wanted to know how the plan addressed gender and disability, how the gender approach of UNICEF differed from the gender action plans of other agencies and how the plan would be implemented in small island States. The NGO Committee on UNICEF offered its strong support for the plan, encouraging the Board to consider the unique role civil society could play in helping to realize the envisioned goals.

58. In response, the Deputy Executive Director thanked delegations for their strong support for the plan and confirmed that UNICEF was working very closely with all United Nations agencies on gender, even if each agency was developing a results framework suited to its own mandate and work. Details on capacity and resources were still being worked out, she said, but would be shared in the final costed plan. She noted that the thematic fund would support targeted initiatives, innovation and monitoring and evaluation related to gender, but it would not exclude the use of other sectoral thematic funds.

59. The Principal Adviser stressed that it was important to have the right mix of decentralized results, reporting and regional approaches on gender, in line with the organization's decentralized structure. She confirmed that the 15 per cent target applied to all programme expenditures, not only special initiatives, and that UNICEF was assessing the gender marker as a tool, in order to determine how it could be further refined. She noted that the emphasis on adolescence emerged in part from conversations with the other agencies, a collaboration, she said, that had already shown results in putting early marriage on the global agenda. Other collaboration on gender, in health and education, was being developed, she said, while engagement with Member States helped in developing robust indicators for the results framework. She confirmed that the issue of gender and disabilities was a key concern. UNICEF aimed to address how intersecting inequalities affect the lives of children.

60. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/2 (see annex III).

D. Thematic discussion on the work of UNICEF in humanitarian situations

61. Following introductory remarks by the Deputy Executive Director for External Relations, the Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes opened the discussion. A background document (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.4) was available.

62. The Deputy Executive Director described a rapidly changing humanitarian landscape and the increasing caseload of UNICEF and its partners. She said that UNICEF was taking steps to respond to challenges and seizing opportunities, including the challenge of having to respond in increasingly complex and diverse settings. To better respond and plan, the organization was applying lessons learned from emergencies, such as Haiti and Pakistan in 2010, to more recent ones, such as the Syrian crisis and emergencies in the Philippines and Central African Republic.

63. The Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes said that, in response to the increased demands arising for UNICEF by a multiplicity of humanitarian situations, UNICEF was taking a more strategic approach to working with Governments and other partners. The aim of UNICEF humanitarian action was to effectively respond to humanitarian situations to save lives, protect rights and address vulnerabilities in a more systematic way. He described the new strengthening humanitarian assistance initiative of UNICEF, which was in line with the UNICEF strategic plan and aimed to strengthen UNICEF delivery of the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action. He also described the work being done with other United Nations agencies on the transformative agenda of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. He updated the Executive Board on the results for children achieved in 2012.

64. Most delegations who spoke expressed appreciation for the update and the new initiatives undertaken by UNICEF, and welcomed having humanitarian issues included regularly in the agenda of the Executive Board.

65. Delegations commended UNICEF for being a trusted and efficient partner in humanitarian action, which comprised one third of the organization's work. One group of delegations expressed alarm at the number and magnitude of humanitarian crises around the world. Another remarked on the unparalleled challenge faced by

UNICEF in responding to so many humanitarian situations, including three declared level-3 emergencies requiring global mobilization.

66. High praise was given to the staff members who risk their well-being and lives to carry out the mission of UNICEF for children. As noted by one delegation, staff work in hotspots such as the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic was tremendous. Wide support was expressed for the No Lost Generation initiative for the Syrian crisis.

67. Noting that the caseload for humanitarian action was expected to grow in the future, some delegations questioned whether UNICEF had sufficient capacity to deal with that. They requested that the organization further build the capacity of its staff members to respond swiftly and effectively to all types of emergencies. It was also essential to bolster partnerships, including stronger inter-agency coordination. That was one of the major lessons learned from previous situations. Delegations encouraged UNICEF to continue strengthening its partnerships, in particular with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and WFP, which could include joint missions. One delegation asked about the future collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, which was developing a strategy for engagement in humanitarian emergencies.

68. A group of delegations requested UNICEF to further strengthen its commitment to implementation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee transformative agenda. Another speaker requested updates on the steps being taken by UNICEF to reflect its commitments to the agenda.

69. Appreciation was expressed for the simplified procedures developed by UNICEF for dealing with various levels of emergencies, particularly levels 2 and 3. One group of delegations questioned whether these procedures were shared system-wide among the United Nations agencies and other partners. The group said it looked forward to better integration of humanitarian issues into the development framework in line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. In particular, the Resident Coordinator system should be enhanced to prioritize humanitarian concerns in areas prone to disaster. Another group of delegations requested further clarity on the reporting lines for UNICEF country representatives. UNICEF was praised by others for improving the integration of results-based management into humanitarian situations.

70. Many delegations expressed support for bridging humanitarian needs and long-term development objectives, including through the Strengthening Humanitarian Action initiative, which many delegations welcomed. In this regard, they said it was essential to build capacity of local communities and institutions to react to crises, as this would contribute to longer-term development. The emphasis placed by UNICEF on promoting resilience was welcome.

71. Protecting children from abuse, exploitation and neglect was seen as a top priority, especially during armed conflict. The extensive violation of human rights perpetrated through sexual violence against children, women and others was a critical problem that needed to be addressed by the international community. One delegation noted that the international community faced the worst protection crises in recent memory.

72. In general, the United Nations system needed to take a more robust approach to prevention and violations of humanitarian and human rights law. One delegation suggested training UNICEF staff in international humanitarian law. Another delegation said that work should be guided by principles of humanitarian assistance contained in General Assembly resolution 46/182 from 1991, in particular the principle of consent by the States receiving humanitarian assistance.

73. Another delegation stressed the importance of maintaining humanitarian access in a depoliticized manner. The delegation questioned the amount of resources being channelled to children in the Syrian Arab Republic and asked about reports of recruitment of children in refugee camps into military operations.

74. One delegation recommended that a gender perspective be integrated into humanitarian assistance, and encouraged UNICEF in its work to end gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation in humanitarian contexts. The delegation said it was important to pay attention to the needs of the most vulnerable children, including those with disabilities.

75. A group of delegations emphasized the need for a balance to be reached between the use of effective partnerships and timely delivery of assistance and the need to provide solid assessments and capacity support in areas such as risk management, internal control and security arrangements in high-risk and challenging contexts.

76. The humanitarian cluster system received a number of comments. UNICEF was commended for its work in the clusters, including its improved performance in those it leads. A group of delegations encouraged UNICEF to work more proactively to ensure sustainable financial resources and further investments in surge capacities for cluster and staff leads. It was important to safeguard the use of clusters for humanitarian contexts only and support timely deactivation of clusters where relevant and appropriate. Moreover, it was important to ensure national participation in and ownership of the clusters. The group said it welcomed the evaluation of the role of UNICEF as a cluster lead agency and looked forward to the discussion of the report at the 2014 second regular session of the Executive Board, in September.

77. Regarding resources, one donor delegation stressed that donors have a responsibility to quickly fund new humanitarian situations but at the same time not forget the "orphaned" and protracted crises. UNICEF was urged by one group of delegations to improve reporting on resources allocated to humanitarian assistance and include achievements in this area in the annual report of the Executive Director. One delegation requested that UNICEF organize an informal consultation on the humanitarian thematic funds: the principles, modalities and comparative advantage of their use.

78. UNICEF was also commended by a number of delegations for its innovative approach, including through such measures as unconditional cash transfers in humanitarian situations.

79. In future humanitarian situations, more attention needed to be paid to the security of national staff, who should be engaged in security plans from the start.

80. In its statement, World Vision expressed its appreciation for its strong partnership with UNICEF in humanitarian situations.

81. In response, the Deputy Executive Director thanked delegations for their strong support of staff working under difficult circumstances, as well as their comments on the importance of linking humanitarian and development initiatives and recognition of UNICEF being well placed to do so, building capacity, strengthening partnerships, emphasizing resilience and the improved results-based monitoring and reporting. She welcomed support for efforts being made to improve humanitarian work, including through the Strengthening Humanitarian Action initiative, which aimed to ensure that UNICEF was fit for purpose with the right tools, staff and partnerships, and the transformative agenda, which was being rolled out consistently by all concerned agencies. She and the Executive Director expressed appreciation for the valuable partnership with World Vision and other partners in humanitarian work.

82. The Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes noted that UNICEF was taking key steps to better cover national staff in the security umbrella. He stressed that humanitarian principles were at the Core of the Commitments to Children in Humanitarian Action and the human rights-based approach to programming in a humanitarian setting. UNICEF strongly supported the cluster approach; investment was also needed in nationally led sector coordination in various settings as an alternative to clusters. He said that the performance of UNICEF representatives was regularly monitored, including through the resident/humanitarian coordinator systems. On the issue of resources allocated to the Syrian crisis, he emphasized that funds were supporting efforts not just in the Syrian Arab Republic, but also in the affected neighbouring countries. He said that UNICEF looked forward to engaging further with the Executive Board and partners on the Strengthening Humanitarian Action initiative. He noted that the Strengthening Humanitarian Action initiative would examine whether UNICEF had the right capacities and resources to deliver humanitarian action effectively.

83. The Executive Director emphasized the importance of integrating humanitarian and regular development work, especially as the number of emergencies increased. The escalating number was putting a strain on UNICEF, including its human resources. He said that UNICEF strongly supported measures to increase the security of national staff, a key part of measures to address the security of all staff. In the Syrian crisis, UNICEF was working to address the horrifying violations of children's rights, including the recruitment of children into the conflict. He called on all sides to protect the rights of children.

E. Evaluation: plan for global thematic evaluations

84. The Director of the Evaluation Office presented the plan, which covered global thematic evaluations undertaken by the Evaluation Office. He said that it was the first such plan presented in parallel to the strategic plan, 2014-2017. The Evaluation Office would produce four major evaluations each year, two smaller evaluations and two evaluation synthesis studies, along with relevant "scoping" studies and methodological reviews. According to the indicative costs, major global thematic evaluations would cost around $450,000, while the evaluations of a more narrow scope would cost approximately $250,000 and desk studies around $50,000.

85. Delegations welcomed the plan, noting that UNICEF efforts in evaluation strengthened accountability and learning from previous experience. These were

essential knowledge management tools in validating and improving the impact of the work of the organization on the ground. Delegations welcomed the organization's continued commitment to transparency and recognized the plan's clear logic to focus primarily on programme results. UNICEF was asked whether evaluation of institutional management efficiency and effectiveness could also be part of these evaluations.

86. Some delegations asked whether there would be an evaluation on the UNICEF implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. Others sought clarification on the role of the Evaluation Office in supporting regional and country-level evaluations and asked if there was a similar plan for decentralized evaluations. Some also asked whether sufficient funds were available for global thematic evaluations, noting the stated need for "other resources" to fund such evaluations. Several delegations said they expected a comprehensive approach to coverage, including systematic coverage of countries, and suggested that UNICEF consider undertaking a methodological study in that regard.

87. Delegations commended UNICEF for undertaking joint evaluations on joint programming with other United Nations agencies and suggested that a common guidance be prepared so that joint evaluations and their management responses could be presented in a coherent manner. Some said they looked forward to discussing the evaluation on child protection, and possibly others, at the second regular session of the Executive Board. They also wanted to know more about the systematic integration of gender equality into evaluations and how evaluations would accommodate the equity approach, the linkages between humanitarian assistance and long-term development and cross-cutting issues such as children with disabilities. Others were interested in evaluations on programme effectiveness, particularly the evaluability of the strategic plan, and on reviewing future plans within the larger context of completed evaluations.

88. In response, the Executive Director said an important question was raised in making the distinction between evaluations on programme results, which would certainly take into consideration management issues, and those evaluations that had an initial focus on management.

89. The Director noted that questions on human resources, management and budgets for evaluation, including decentralized regional and country-level evaluations, were usually addressed in the annual report on evaluation at the annual sessions of the Executive Board, adding that he thought a review of implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was better placed within the context of audit than evaluation. Regarding the mobilization of resources, he said that, while there were some gaps in funding for the entire four-year period, he was confident that UNICEF would find sufficient funds and that the priorities set out in the plan for global thematic evaluations would be supported. He welcomed the idea of a methodological study on coverage, but noted that it was important as a first step to consistently monitor the country selections over the next four years. He affirmed the value of joint evaluations, noting they would best be discussed at joint informal meetings of the Executive Boards involved. He agreed that more attention needed to be paid to mainstreaming gender equality, equity and, more generally, human rights into evaluations, and noted that children with disabilities would be reviewed in the evaluation on social inclusion.

90. The Director ended the session by saying that improved results were not achieved by evaluations alone, but also by the use of the evaluation findings and the application of recommendations and actions by management.

F. UNICEF annual financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2012 and report of the Board of Auditors

91. The Deputy Executive Director noted that the financial statements for 2012 were the first to be produced in compliance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). He highlighted the fact that the Board of Auditors had given UNICEF an unqualified audit opinion. One matter of emphasis raised was note 35 in the financial statements, on the relationship of UNICEF with the National Committees for UNICEF.

92. The Comptroller summarized the financial report and statements. He noted that UNICEF had not overspent in any budget category. At the end of 2012, the asset base was $5.7 billion and comprised primarily cash and investments, contributions receivable, outstanding advances of cash transfers, programme inventory and physical assets. Liabilities at the end of 2012 were $2.6 billion, resulting in net assets of $3.1 billion. Total revenue in 2012 was $3.09 billion, 96 per cent of which was voluntary contributions from Governments, National Committees and other non-governmental organizations. The remaining 4 per cent was from the sale of products and services and interest. Expenses totalled $3.6 billion, resulting in a net surplus of $300 million. Overall, 85 per cent of the budget went to programmes and the remaining 15 per cent was used for the institutional budget and private fundraising and partnerships.

93. The Board had made 26 recommendations for 2012, compared to 28 in 2010 and 2011, relating mainly to (a) the monitoring of the implementation of the cooperation agreement with National Committees; (b) budget management; and (c) management of programme and institutional budgets. Work had started on implementing the 2012 recommendations and continued on the recommendations for the 2010-2011 period, which were expected to be closed in February 2014.

94. In response to recommendations for 2012, UNICEF had provided the Board of Auditors with the additional disclosures requested on cost classification and had integrated its budget reporting. UNICEF was working with the Board of Auditors on better separation of programme and operational expenditures and was collaborating with other United Nations agencies on improving oversight and assurance regarding the harmonized approach to cash transfers to partners implementing programmes. Revised guidelines for the harmonized approach to cash transfers were being developed and would soon be shared. UNICEF was working with UNICEF National Committees on new joint strategic plans for the period 2014-2017 and other measures to improve the target rates of contribution to UNICEF and the disclosure of revenue and categories of expenses.

95. Delegations commended UNICEF for its commitment to greater transparency and accountability, including through the successful implementation of IPSAS, which was viewed as a significant achievement. They praised UNICEF for receiving an unqualified audit opinion for 2012. While noting the good progress made on addressing the recommendations made by the Board of Auditors for the biennium 2010-2011, they encouraged UNICEF to close work on these.

96. The National Committees were recognized for their substantial contributions to the income of UNICEF, in particular regular (core) resources. More needed to be done to improve the relationship between UNICEF and National Committees, notably the cooperation agreements, which could be made more transparent and be consistently monitored and implemented. It was important to work with National Committees to improve oversight and monitoring. Support was expressed for the recently developed joint strategic plans and road maps, with one group of delegations suggesting the creation of peer review groups among the Committees. It was important, this group said, to enforce the rate of 75 per cent as the target for the amount of funds transferred to UNICEF in a timely manner and to account adequately for the other 25 per cent. Another group of delegations noted the challenge in accounting for advocacy activity of National Committees in promoting the rights of the child. Rather than being seen as an administrative cost, this could instead be considered part of the contribution of National Committees to fulfilling the mandate of UNICEF.

97. A number of delegations supported stronger oversight of the harmonized approach to cash transfers. Without such oversight, they said, UNICEF was exposing itself to various risks. UNICEF was called upon to follow up on the recommendations of the Board of Auditors in this area and to share information on progress made. In particular, UNICEF and the other agencies should prioritize the finalization of the harmonized approach to cash transfers framework and ensure its full implementation.

98. A third main concern expressed by delegations was the use of the programme budget to cover operational expenditures not associated with programmes and projects. UNICEF needed to clarify which costs related to programmes and which to management and other support activities. That was key to achieving full cost recovery and compliance with Executive Board decisions on cost recovery and harmonized cost classification.

99. Delegations requested UNICEF to provide more detail on the costs incurred in key operational areas. One group suggested that UNICEF disclose expenses in categories similar to the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions with regard to the integrated budget, including human resources, finance and procurement. The group said it would like to see financial information presented in such a format in future audited financial statements. In general, there should be greater alignment between the formats of the integrated budget and reporting on accounting for the Executive Board.

100. UNICEF was also encouraged to strengthen internal controls and improve oversight, budget monitoring and programme management in country offices and to ensure compliance with policies and procedures for procurement and asset management. One delegation asked UNICEF to make more publicly available information on cases involving irregularity and the resulting sanctions imposed. Another requested that more attention be paid to unfunded after-service liabilities.

101. In response, the Executive Director emphasized the crucial work National Committees accomplish in both fundraising and advocacy. He said he welcomed the attention given to the goal of having all National Committees meet the 75 per cent target. This had been discussed at great length last year with the auditors and was being addressed very seriously with the National Committees. Since some of the smaller Committees could take longer to reach the goal, UNICEF was working with

them on road maps and providing other forms of assistance. He said he appreciated the fact that delegations recognized that the Committees were entities legally independent of UNICEF and had tax status that varied by country. On the question raised of how to recognize the contribution of advocacy, he said that complex issue was one of the most important ones to be dealt with in the coming year, and good progress was expected.

102. The Deputy Executive Director said that the harmonized approach to cash transfers had been the subject of a joint audit among UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. The three agencies were working on a new policy paper based on the recommendations of the audit. Internally, UNICEF was rolling out a new strategy on managing relationships with implementing partners, supported by additional posts and new monitoring systems. That was a high priority for UNICEF.

103. To implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, the Comptroller said that UNICEF had a plan in place with clear lines of accountability. Regarding work with National Committees, there was an action plan being discussed, which UNICEF was committed to implementing.

104. He said budget categories were being reviewed country by country to make sure that management costs in the institutional budget were not charged to programmes, and that posts directly tied to implementation of other resources projects were funded from other resources. He noted that, while the financial statements summarized the major categories of expenses, the notes in the financial report provided greater detail. He suggested that delegations look at the latter to obtain more information. On after-service health insurance, he said that UNICEF had a comparatively large reserve and planned on enlarging it. Turning to the harmonized approach to cash transfers, he said that UNICEF would regularly report to the Executive Board on implementing new plans for the harmonized approach to cash transfers, including through the annual report of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations.

105. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/3 (see annex III).

G. Private fundraising: 2014 workplan and proposed budget

106. The Director of Private Fundraising and Partnerships introduced the report on private funding and partnerships (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.1).

107. Following introductory remarks by the Deputy Executive Director of External Relations, the Director of Private Fundraising and Partnerships presented the 2014 workplan and budget (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.1).

108. Delegations welcomed the fundraising efforts by the Private Fundraising and Partnerships, UNICEF country offices and the National Committees, noting with great appreciation the increase in mobilization of resources and the continued reduction of operating expenditures. Some noted the efforts made to link the Private Fundraising and Partnerships budget with the integrated budget of UNICEF, stating that it was useful in providing transparency in the information presented. Others encouraged the Private Fundraising and Partnerships to continue efficiency efforts, particularly in reducing management costs, as well as restructuring relations with the National Committees, strengthening oversight compliance and risk management.

109. Some emphasized the need to continue monitoring compliance with the Cooperation Agreement with the National Committees, in order to ensure that the recommendations made in the 2012 report of the Board of Auditors were implemented, and called for effective oversight of the activities of the National Committees. Others noted the significant increase in investment funds within a reduced budget, reflecting the overall shift to maximize return on investment, but sought assurances that caution would be exercised in these new fundraising campaigns.

110. The head of the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF commended the flourishing relationship between the Private Fundraising and Partnerships and the National Committees, noting that it was a challenge to find the right balance between independence and interdependence. She acknowledged the diversity of the individual National Committees, particularly in reaching the envisioned 75 per cent contribution rate, but affirmed that all shared the commitment to the children of the world. The National Committees and UNICEF, as equal partners, had established formal monitoring mechanisms to reinforce compliance with the Cooperation Agreement.

111. In response, the Director agreed with the need to ensure a consistent monitoring of compliance with the 2011 Cooperation Agreement and noted that during the first year of the agreement, a lot of effort went into putting monitoring systems in place. She said she was confident the recommendations of the external auditors would be implemented and monitored in future years. She thanked the Board members for their support in the expansion of fundraising activities and the continuing efforts to reduce operating expenditures. She said the annual Private Fundraising and Partnerships budget was considered a part of the integrated budget, and noted that adjustments to the budget would be made depending on how the market environment performed. The same applied to the use of investment funds for private fundraising; those activities that did not yield the expected returns on investment would be readjusted. That was, she said, in line with the transparency approach of UNICEF, as well as the accountability of the organization to the Executive Board.

112. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/3 (see annex III).

H. Pledging event

113. The Executive Director introduced the event. He thanked the partners of UNICEF, emphasizing that partnerships would always be a cornerstone of everything UNICEF did to realize the rights of all children to health, safety and education despite the barriers.

114. He said that UNICEF would not be able to achieve the results of the strategic plan unless it was adequately funded. He added that UNICEF relied on the generosity of its many partners who provided resources to ensure agility in reacting to humanitarian emergencies, delivering clinical care and psychosocial counselling to survivors of conflict, and providing vaccinations, education and water and sanitation to vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities.

115. Highlighting the fact that the amount of core resources received from Governments had declined by 6 per cent from 2012 to 2013, he urged resource partners to champion the core sources that enable the achievement of results.

116. The representatives of 11 Governments pledged their support for UNICEF in the amount of $52 million.[1]

117. The Executive Director thanked the Governments. He said that UNICEF would meet the promises of its strategic plan, committed to accountability and transparency, a zero tolerance for fraud, strong financial management and oversight, and management of risk in the often unstable and volatile situations in which UNICEF works.

I. Other matters

Provisional list of agenda items

118. The provisional list of agenda items for the Executive Board annual session of 2014 was presented by the Secretary of the Executive Board.

J. Adoption of draft decisions

119. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2014/1 through 2014/4 (see annex III).

K. Closing statements

120. In his closing remarks, the Executive Director reflected on the some of the statistics that had been discussed during the session, noting that though some were positive, others showed the extraordinary challenges that lay ahead to fulfil the rights of children worldwide. These numbers and events, such as the tragic deaths of the two UNICEF staff members and others killed in the recent terrorist attack in Kabul, should inspire all to think harder and in new ways on how better to serve children: to integrate programmes across sectors, especially protection; to link humanitarian action to development and resilience from the very first days of emergency response; and to integrate gender action and the rights of girls and women into everything UNICEF does. Work needed to focus especially on the most disadvantaged, as the inequalities around the world continued to grow, rather than diminish. He thanked the participants for their expressions of support and of sympathy for the two lost colleagues. It meant a great deal to UNICEF staff around the world to be acknowledged, especially those working in the most difficult and dangerous places.

121. In his statement, the President noted the good outcome of the session owing to the strong engagement of the participants and the dedicated efforts of the Secretary

[1] For details of government contributions to regular resources pledged or paid for the years 2013 and 2014 (as of 6 February 2014), see "UNICEF regular resources: Pledges for 2014" (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.2), posted to the UNICEF Executive Board website. Contributions also include pledges received during the United Nations Pledging Conference in November 2013 and those received outside of pledging events. As of 6 February 2014, UNICEF had received total pledges of $121 million for regular resources in 2014 from 32 Governments.

and her team in the smooth running of the session. He thanked the facilitators for streamlining negotiations on the four decisions adopted by the Executive Board. Those decisions, along with the presentations and discussions during the session, showed that UNICEF was a learning organization, and because of that it continued to innovate. He encouraged Member States to continue to support UNICEF in championing children's rights and addressing inequity, particularly in view of the development of the post-2015 agenda. Stressing that strong strategic partnerships were increasingly important for UNICEF to be more effective on the ground, he commended the important partnership with the European Union, which had been highlighted in the special focus session. He said he looked forward to the next special focus session, on Africa's children, to learn more about how UNICEF could innovate and strengthen and expand its work and partnerships with the African Union and Governments to achieve more lasting results for children in Africa.

III. Joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP

122. This chapter is a summary of the discussions that took place during the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UNDP/UNFPA, UNOPS, UN-Women and WFP, held on 3 February 2014. The text was prepared by the secretariats of the funds and programmes and approved by the Presidents of the four Executive Boards.

A. Performance standard on gender mainstreaming across the strategic plans 2014-2017 of UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP

(Emphasizing country experiences; and the United Nations system-wide action plan on gender equality and the empowerment of women)

123. The President of the UN-Women Executive Board opened the meeting welcoming all participants of the Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards for the year 2014, including the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Recovery and Governance and the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Coordinator to Liberia, Mr. Aeneas Chapinga Chuma and UN-Women staff who joined the session via videoconference.

124. The Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women introduced this agenda item noting that no system-wide endeavour to promote peace, development or human rights can be effectively pursued without advancing women's empowerment and gender equality. She reiterated that the strategic plans' alignment with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, was the result of close collaboration among the six entities that continue to actively participate in global inter-agency initiatives at the Headquarters and field levels.

125. With respect to the United Nations system-wide action plan on gender equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), she noted some of the common trends emerging across the accountability framework's 15 performance indicators. The head of the Entity also stressed the importance of this forum's discussion benefitting from the experience and insights from the field, with a view to

highlighting the steps taken within countries to strengthen collective accountability for gender equality.

126. The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Recovery and Governance and the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Coordinator to Liberia, speaking from a country perspective, outlined in his presentation the One Gender Framework developed and implemented by the United Nations country team, that accompanies the Delivering as One programme. He emphasized the importance of the United Nations system as a whole, working collectively on gender mainstreaming. These efforts must be informed by the fact that processes and structures are not an end in themselves but a means for delivering improved results for women and girls.

127. The following points were among those raised in statements delivered by over 20 Member States:

(a) Recognition that the UN-SWAP provides insight into the progress made in gender mainstreaming, in analyses of performance in all institutional areas.

(b) With regard to the implementation of measures to fulfil the performance standards, the six entities are well advanced. However, important efforts remain necessary in several areas, such as strategic planning, resource allocation, capacity development and organizational culture.

(c) A call for issues such as the following to be prioritized in the post-2015 development agenda:

(i) Promotion of family-based solutions to global problems;

(ii) Strengthening of efforts to combat sexual violence against women and girls;

(iii) Enhancing the sexual and reproductive health of women;

(iv) Strengthening laws that promote gender equality; and

(v) Ensuring access to quality education and skills application for women and girls.

(d) The importance of performance standards in relation to compacts that United Nations entities establish with respect to their mandates and governing bodies.

(e) The importance of a prudent division of labour and elimination of duplication among United Nations entities as part of the UN-SWAP.

(f) Suggestion that the six United Nations entities in addition to the sister agencies that participate in the UN-SWAP should explore the possibility of providing, on a regular basis, information regarding their assessments, to their respective Executive Boards.

(g) In working towards enhancing the institutionalization of measures through the UN-SWAP, Delivering as One, and ensuring a coherent approach among United Nations country teams to develop joint policies, programmes and advocacy initiatives will be of critical importance.

(h) Call on United Nations entities to apply the United Nations Development Group's Guidance Note on the Gender Marker, in order to account for how they implement their commitments through their spending.

(i) The need for United Nations entities to continue raising standards of accountability on gender mainstreaming across all areas of work.

(j) Call for the United Nations to enhance partnership towards achieving transformative change that also takes into account gender stereotypes and rigid definitions of the roles of men and women in society.

(k) Suggestion that gender audits should become an obligatory exercise for all country offices.

(l) Call for Member States to step up funding of the commitments made on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

(m) Support for the stand-alone gender equality goal together with full integration of gender equality into all other goals in the post 2015 development agenda.

(n) Appreciation for attention paid to the situation of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations.

128. The President of the UN-Women Executive Board acknowledged with appreciation all staff from the six United Nations entities who worked on the development and the piloting of the UN-SWAP.

129. Principals of the six United Nations entities made the following points:

(a) There remains much room for improvement in spite of progress made so far. While the coordinated efforts of the United Nations entities have yielded notable results, limited resources could hinder UN-Women from doing more. All entities should keep advocacy in mind as an important component towards improving in a meaningful way, the lives of women, girls and entire populations;

(b) In working on gender mainstreaming, the specific needs of girls should be taken into account, including the protection of the rights of both boys and girls. The new Gender Action Plan of UNICEF, still under development, was aligned with the 2014-2017 strategic plan. The final version of the Gender Action Plan would be presented to the June session of the 2014 UNICEF Executive Board;

(c) There is need for continued focus on the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, on gender equality; empowerment of women; and poverty, especially in relation to universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights of women to make choices in this regard (Millennium Development Goals 4, 5 and 6);

(d) Pursuing a coherent approach strengthens the capacity of the United Nations system to work on cross-cutting issues in response to national priorities. Such an approach facilitates greater focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including in joint policy, programming and advocacy activities. All entities should continue working together towards maximizing comparative advantages and overcoming common challenges.

B. Coherence of United Nations action against poverty and vulnerability and towards resilience

(Emphasizing Delivering as One at country level to ensure the coherence of United Nations action)

130. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS welcomed the representatives of the six United Nations entities and the guest speakers from the Uruguay country office. He noted the reaffirmation in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review that "eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development in developing countries", calling on the funds, programmes and specialized agencies "to assign it the highest priority".

131. The UNDP Administrator in her introductory remarks set the context for the meeting including by reinforcing some of the elements of the background paper prepared for the session. She stressed that poverty and vulnerability are multidimensional challenges causes by or contributed to by a range of factors. Therefore an integrated approach is necessary at all levels across sectors, governments and United Nations entities. The United Nations therefore needs to bring all expertise together to provide enhanced integrated and coherent advice to countries, with a view to meaningfully contributing to the reduction of poverty and vulnerability and building resilience.

132. Guest Speaker, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to Uruguay Ms. Denise Cook, was joined by the UNICEF Representative and UNDP Resident Representative in Uruguay. Accompanied by the presentation of a short video, she shared the experience of working towards increased coherence of United Nations action in Uruguay, a high-income country (according to IFI indexes), where ODA flows have therefore not played a significant role in its development. Ms. Cook highlighted the advantages of joint programming and called on United Nations entities to continue working towards the elimination of interagency barriers in this regard.

133. Points raised thereafter by 14 delegations, included the following:

(a) The One Fund needs further support of donors in some cases. On the overarching vision of poverty reduction and the coordinated role of the United Nations, two prerequisites are essential in this context: (i) United Nations alignment with national plans to alleviate poverty, not vice-versa. In other words, new strategic plans of United Nations entities should not necessitate the realignment of country programmes; and (ii) more clarity on the requisite policy intervention with respect to poverty eradication;

(b) To alleviate poverty, economic growth is essential as it creates employment and earning opportunities; and generates investible revenues. Access to basic services is also a must;

(c) Poverty eradication should be addressed through seeking to combat its root causes;

(d) Alleviating poverty, addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience require multidimensional and integrated approaches. Joint programming instruments and common approaches such as Delivering as One are therefore important and it is

necessary to strive for coherence in seeking to fulfil intergovernmental commitments with respect to the disadvantaged at all levels;

(e) Important to note (as outlined in the background paper of this meeting), the independent evaluation of lessons learned from Delivering as One provided evidence that through this approach, the United Nations development system has been better positioned to apply the kind of integrated policy solutions and responses needed to address multidimensional and interlinked development challenges;

(f) For meaningful programming, a solution to the lack of disaggregated data with respect to disadvantaged populations and vulnerable groups as reported by many United Nations country teams, needs to be jointly sought, together with national statistical offices;

(g) In order to better analyse and address challenges, the role of evaluations should be emphasized;

(h) The implementation of the standard operating procedures of the initiatives of Delivering as One, the basis of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review reform agenda, should be accelerated at the corporate and country level; 2014 should be the year of implementation;

(i) Need to further address common approaches to risk management and monitoring especially in vulnerable and fragile situations;

(j) United Nations entities should focus more on results rather than on process and consider joint reporting at joint Executive Board meetings;

(k) Delivery as One should be implemented on a voluntary basis;

(l) Need to prioritize and formulate actions based on the limited resources available with the aim of spending resources much more effectively.

134. Principals of the six United Nations entities made the following points:

(a) Reaffirmation of the commitment of United Nations entities to Delivering as One and United Nations reform;

(b) Call for support of donors such as, with respect to the multi-donor trust fund managed by UNDP on behalf of the United Nations system;

(c) Gender-responsive planning is crucial;

(d) In accordance with the strategic plan and the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, there are ongoing efforts to best optimize joint alignment with the national agenda. UNFPA for example is urging country offices to optimize programme and operational resources, and technical knowledge at the county level, in collaboration with the entire United Nations system;

(e) Need for enhancing joint evaluation and monitoring. UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA are currently in the process of piloting new approaches to joint monitoring at the country level;

(f) The fact that the voluntary nature of Delivering as One, and that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review has endorsed Delivering as One as a business model, presents a challenge in that the United Nations system finds itself working with two business models (Delivering as One versus non-Delivering as One).

One way of overcoming this challenge is by testing various aspects of the standard operating procedures in non-Delivering as One countries.

135. In summarizing the meeting's discussions the UNICEF Executive Director noted that given its multi-dimensional nature, such as in causes, manifestations and impacts, there is need to define poverty beyond measurements of income and gross national product. The United Nations entities' diverse mandates and skills position the United Nations system very well in addressing the challenges related to poverty eradication in a complementary manner.

136. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS closed the meeting by thanking delegations and the six United Nations entities for their active participation and rich discussion.

Part two
Annual session of 2014

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 3-6 June 2014

I. Organization of the session

A. Opening statements by the President and the Executive Director (item 1)

137. The President welcomed participants to the annual session of 2014. He said that the United Nations was at a historic milestone as 2015 approached. The rights and well-being of children must feature prominently in the new sustainable development goals and the post-2015 agenda. The new framework would require UNICEF to innovate, respond with determination to humanitarian and development challenges, exercise moral, principled and practical leadership on behalf of children, increase its effectiveness and efficiency, and light the path to equity for all children. In this context, this session's special focus session, on sustainability and development in Africa — a child-centred perspective, was opportune.

138. In reviewing progress, it was important to recognize the great work that had been done for children in Africa in the last 25 years, and to note that in the past 10 years, many African countries had attained high levels of economic growth and had made significant progress towards poverty alleviation. Nonetheless, without targeted policies for children and families, economic growth alone would not prevent unnecessary deaths or alleviate the suffering and exploitation of children. Economic growth and the fight against inequality and inequity must go hand in hand. Statistics showed that Africa's children faced striking disparities within and across countries and across regions. Africa's children deserved and needed more to be done in the face of myriad socioeconomic, political, cultural and humanitarian challenges.

139. UNICEF must therefore scale up and intensify progress in Africa for Africa's children by doing the following: developing a clear and comprehensive strategic action plan for children as part of its generic policy for Africa; apply the principle of equity not only within nations but between nations and regions; increase by a significant percentage the allocation of both regular and other resources to country programmes in Africa; work better with African institutions to ensure that UNICEF investments have a lasting impact on the capacity of Africa to respond through its own institutions; and commit to end, by 2030, the major childhood killers of hunger, malnutrition, malaria, HIV/AIDS, diarrhoea and pneumonia.

140. The Executive Director expressed appreciation for all UNICEF staff, especially those working under enormous pressure in areas of conflict, crisis and emergency, such as South Sudan, the Central African Republic and Syrian Arab Republic.

141. As the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child approached, it was important to recognize that human rights are not self-executing. The challenge for Governments — and for UNICEF — had always been the practical support of those rights in a changing world. The world has a huge stake in building a full future for children born today. If UNICEF fails to deliver results for them, the costs will be great: fewer opportunities, unbalanced economies, worsening health and greater global instability. These costs will represent a betrayal of the right of every person to an equal opportunity to live a healthy, fulfilling life — and a betrayal of the aspiration of every society to be built by, nourished by and enriched by citizens able and willing to do so. The challenge for UNICEF was to anticipate,

adapt to, and act on those trends in its work within the organization, with national Governments and with other partners.

142. There was no question that change and progress were possible for millions of children around the world. The post-2015 development agenda provided an opportunity to set clear priorities for health, nutrition, water, sanitation, education and protection to benefit all children. National statistical averages must not again blur the focus on the children most in need.

143. UNICEF must also use change to manage change in its work. It has begun to do so through the new strategic plan, 2014-2017. The effectiveness and efficiency exercise was helping the organization eliminate duplication and keep resources tied as closely as possible to children's needs. UNICEF had also embarked on two interrelated exercises, "UNICEF 3.0" and "UNICEF 4.0", to evaluate trends and projections for the future in the medium and long terms, and assess their implications for children.

144. UNICEF needed to align its programme actions with those aimed at longer-term results, and these actions needed to be integrated and not confined within silos. Through various forms of matrix management, UNICEF would respond in a more coordinated manner to the needs of the "whole" child. He described changes UNICEF was making key changes to its organizational structure to better integrate programmes and partnerships. These changes will be cost- and position-neutral, and the Staff Association had been involved in the process. Finally, to help drive more efficient management for results in support of regional and country offices, the secretariat proposed creating a new Deputy Executive Director position, which will not require new funding, to work with regional and country offices to strengthen clear chains of management responsibility and accountability for results, and the reporting of those results. The Executive Board was being asked to approve this new position at this session.

145. Innovation continued to be a focus in "using change to manage change". Some 265 innovations were being explored right now around the world. The new global innovation centre in Nairobi had begun to build its board of advisers — innovation experts from both inside and outside of the United Nations, who would work with the Innovation Unit in New York and the 13 UNICEF innovation labs around the world to incubate and strategically scale up initiatives like "U Report" in Uganda. These changes and innovations were aimed at the core mission of UNICEF: support for the rights of the hundreds of millions of children who are expected to benefit least from the next 25 years of change in the world.

146. UNICEF could maintain this progress because of the trust shown by Governments and other donors. Last year, thanks to their advocacy and commitment, UNICEF received more financial support than ever before. Private sector donors, in 2013, for the first time gave more to UNICEF regular resources than the public sector. However, the challenge remains of how to manage increasingly complex operations without greater support for core resources.

147. Following the opening remarks, Her Majesty Queen Sofia of Spain gave a statement highlighting in particular the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

B. Adoption of the agenda (item 2)

148. The Executive Board adopted the provisional agenda, timetable and organization of work for the session (E/ICEF/2014/5).

149. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 80 observer delegations, including 1 intergovernmental organization, 8 National Committees for UNICEF and 11 non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: performance and results for 2013, including a report on implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (item 3)

150. The Executive Director remarked on the progress made and results achieved by UNICEF in its five focus areas, cross-cutting work, and operational effectiveness and efficiency. Following remarks by the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, the report (E/ICEF/2014/6 and E/ICEF/2014/6/Add.1) and the data companion were introduced by the Director, Policy and Strategy.

151. Many delegations highlighted the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the contribution of UNICEF to the progress achieved since the adoption of the Convention.

152. Speakers paid tribute to UNICEF staff around the world, particularly those who were killed or harmed while working to protect the rights of children.

153. Delegations welcomed the achievements and progress highlighted in the annual report of the Executive Director. UNICEF was commended for its leadership and commitment to accountability, good governance, efficiency and transparency.

154. Progress in child survival would not have been possible without multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovative approaches, it was said. UNICEF was encouraged to continue working with partners in and outside the United Nations to achieve the ambitious objectives of the new strategic plan, especially with regard to reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized children and families. UNICEF was commended for its continued leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

155. The UNICEF focus on innovation had been key in scaling up results by increasing the organization's ability to adapt and respond more effectively, it was said. Integrating innovation into existing programming offered the opportunity to solve bottlenecks with relatively small interventions. Innovation was a powerful tool to forge partnerships and synergies that would yield results for children. The value of information and communication technology was stressed, as exemplified by the measurable progress achieved by use of mobile devices and cloud computing in programme delivery and management.

156. Despite the progress made, both challenges and opportunities lay ahead, said several speakers. Of particular concern was the growing number of children suffering extreme deprivations from conflict and other humanitarian emergencies, and the children and families who remained unreached despite national, regional

and global progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. Speakers stressed the value of the UNICEF equity approach and use of disaggregated indicators to identify and address gaps and persistent disparities among regions and States. Africa required special attention, although other regions, including Asia and the Pacific, also faced serious disparities in and between countries.

157. Several delegations expressed outrage about the kidnapping of 223 Nigerian schoolgirls, which had been one of the worst violations of human rights. UNICEF was urged to define a comprehensive strategic action plan for Africa's children, with a clear objective of accelerating results. One speaker, who had led the recent field visit of Executive Board members to the Sudan, said the UNICEF team was responding to multiple problems and challenges and the children of the Sudan must remain high on the agenda.

158. UNICEF should continue to ensure the integration of the rights of children and adolescents in the post-2015 agenda. UNICEF was uniquely positioned to do so because of its experience with equity, innovative approaches, funding and partnerships. A universal framework to achieve sustainable development required a paradigm shift at the policy and operational levels.

159. Delegations expressed appreciation for the collaborative work of UNICEF in implementing the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and furthering various United Nations system-wide reforms.

160. A speaker stressed the importance of results-based budgeting and reporting as key elements of transparency, accountability and approved measures of efficiency. Efforts were encouraged to achieve common results and harmonized indicators among United Nations agencies with overlapping mandates.

161. Delegations expressed appreciation for the new format and streamlined process for approval of country programmes. They welcomed efforts to ensure better alignment of country programme documents and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. The approval by the Executive Boards was one of the few steps of the joint planning, programming, implementing and monitoring of country programmes that was part of the governance function. The changes in the approval process should result in improved efficiency, effectiveness and cohesiveness in the system and strengthen national ownership.

162. Other points made about the focus of country programmes included the need for capacity-building of service providers; the need to strengthen traditional family social values and the role of the family in raising children; the importance of working in middle-income countries; and the need for greater emphasis on the participation of children, particularly adolescents. South-South cooperation should be scaled up and its potential fully harnessed as a forum for exchanging knowledge, experience and expertise. A delegation expressed appreciation for UNICEF support for drafting important laws related to justice for children.

163. Delegations said that UNICEF should continue to invest in strengthening national capacities to collect and analyse data, help national authorities to identify disparities and appropriately target interventions. UNICEF was commended for its work in improving the measurement of child poverty, promoting birth registration and strengthening national statistical offices. A speaker expressed support for the work of the Innocenti Research Centre.

164. Delegations said the new Gender Action Plan equipped UNICEF with clear, programmatic and institutional effectiveness results and a dedicated budget to achieve its gender-equity objectives. UNICEF should continue to invest resources in gender equality. Several delegations stressed the importance of girls' education, which was particularly important for the most marginalized and vulnerable children and young people, including children with disabilities. More reporting on progress on inclusive education would be appreciated.

165. In the face of growing food insecurity, UNICEF should broaden its complementary feeding programmes for young children and work with the World Food Programme's school feeding programme to help improve nutrition and reduce dropout rates.

166. Delegations commended UNICEF for its responses to the increasing number of humanitarian disasters in 2014, including four Level 3 emergencies, and for its efforts to advance United Nations system collaboration. Based on that reality, UNICEF should consider increasing its preparedness to deal with more than two Level 3 emergencies at the same time, as was now the case. UNICEF should improve the ways it sets goals and targets for humanitarian action, moves from humanitarian action to development assistance and handles risks in the most difficult situations and countries. At the same time, it should build resilience and thus national and community capacities to better respond to humanitarian situations. UNICEF was encouraged to continue to engage constructively with humanitarian coordinators and humanitarian country teams, incentivizing collective results and needs assessments.

167. Several delegations commented on the Syrian crisis, which had placed a heavy burden on the countries and communities hosting refugees, and on the international humanitarian community. Currently, 3.5 million people were not receiving aid they desperately needed. Member States had a responsibility to ensure that humanitarian actors had room to manoeuvre and that the humanitarian imperative was not compromised.

168. A speaker expressed concern regarding the situation of children in South-eastern Ukraine as a result of the escalation of combat activities there.

169. UNICEF was commended for its innovative, new technology-based and partnership-focused initiatives and campaigns, especially the End Violence against Children initiative, "Making the Invisible Visible" and No Lost Generation.

170. Delegations congratulated UNICEF for its achievements in mobilizing other resources, although regular resources income from Governments was lower than expected for 2013. Speakers appealed to Member States to increase their contributions to core resources and humanitarian assistance. The proposed information system providing transparent and regularly updated information was key to a comprehensive understanding of actual funding from different types of resources and partners. For flexible funding, the modalities for follow-up, reporting and dialogue on results were crucial. Speakers recognized the vital contribution of the National Committees for UNICEF, which in 2013 contributed a record $1.14 billion in net income to UNICEF.

171. Several delegations expressed support for the proposal to establish a fourth post of Deputy Executive Director. UNICEF was requested to keep the Executive Board informed on the reorganization of the secretariat. The introduction of a matrix

approach would hopefully help to break down some organizational silos. Several speakers expressed support for the establishment of the global shared services centre, and suggested that UNICEF look into exchanges with other funds and programmes on shared inter-agency service centres. UNICEF was encouraged to focus more intensely on human resources management to ensure that the organization had a strong and effective workforce.

172. Speakers expressed appreciation for the high-quality work of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations and the Evaluation Office, and for the attention paid by senior management to cross-cutting themes, trends and risks. Overall, there was growing professionalism, independence and transparency within UNICEF, and there was a need for continued allocation of adequate resources and capacities for internal control and sound financial management. UNICEF was encouraged to continue to carefully plan for risk-based audits and evaluations as it expanded its work in difficult operational contexts.

173. UNICEF was urged to continue discussions on a common approach to risk assessment, management and monitoring for all the funds and programmes and for donors. With a renewed focus on fragile and conflict-affected countries, the funds and programmes and donor countries must be able to communicate openly about the challenges of operating in such situations.

174. Speakers acknowledged continuing improvements in the quality of UNICEF evaluations. They recommended increasing the proportion of country offices with evaluation expertise, better evaluation of humanitarian actions and more timely action on evaluation recommendations.

175. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/5 (see annex III).

UNICEF report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (item 3)

176. The Executive Board took note of the report.

B. Final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017 (item 4)

177. The results framework (E/ICEF/2014/8) was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes and the Director, Policy and Strategy.

178. A delegation said the framework was in line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and specified concrete indicators that reflected the rights and interests of the most vulnerable children. In implementing the framework, UNICEF offices would facilitate countries' achievement of their national development objectives.

179. Other delegations expressed appreciation for the strategic thinking and extensive consultation process behind the framework, and for the emphasis on disaggregating data wherever possible by gender and other considerations. A delegation expressed satisfaction with the results framework and the associated theory of change, which paved the way for demonstrating robust outcomes and lasting impacts. Another said that the rights-based approach of the strategic plan needed to be reflected in the results reporting, particularly in relation to gender and the rights of persons with disabilities.

180. Delegations suggested an updated format for future reporting, which should include both results and progress according to the strategic plan and targets. There should be continued dialogue with UNICEF on how the framework could be further refined, for example to take into account the post-2015 agenda. There should be follow-up on the translation of the global results framework into the results frameworks of country programmes. UNICEF was encouraged to work towards publishing annual effectiveness reviews based on the results framework, tracking the annual progress and implementation status of its development agenda and performance. Another delegation said that benchmarks of the country programmes should be consistent with internationally agreed indicators and did not appear to make a value judgement on the capability of any Member State. The source of data for the results framework must be agreed upon after consultations with relevant Governments.

181. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/6 (see annex III).

C. Gender equality and empowerment of women (item 5)

182. The progress report (E/ICEF/2014/10) and Gender Action Plan (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.12) were introduced by the Deputy Executive Director, Programmes, and the Principal Adviser, Gender and Rights.

(a) Report on progress of work in gender equality and empowerment of women in UNICEF

183. Delegations congratulated UNICEF on producing a comprehensive progress report on gender issues and noted its positive findings, including the increase in the percentage of country programmes that are mainstreaming gender considerations. A speaker noted that UNICEF had designated gender-equality advisers in all regional offices and had prompted country offices to better incorporate the gender perspective in country programmes of cooperation. UNICEF should now work to enhance the gender sensitivity of all staff and fully take the gender perspective into account in project planning, monitoring and evaluation.

184. Two delegations expressed concern about declining funding for gender-related programmes in South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific, asking how the Gender Action Plan would be implemented in these regions.

185. Delegations said the progress report was transparent and frank in addressing progress and shortfalls of implementing the strategic priority action plan for gender equality 2010-2013.

(b) UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017

186. Delegations expressed appreciation for the broad collaborative process behind development of the Gender Action Plan. Success in reducing gender inequalities and advancing the empowerment of girls and women depends on the efforts of all United Nations agencies to implement the system-wide action plan on gender equality. In that regard, collaboration at field level is essential to leverage the competitive advantages of partnering organizations. UNICEF should continue leading and participating in joint initiatives, within and beyond the United Nations, that promote coherence and multi-stakeholder partnerships. In implementing the Gender Action

Plan, UNICEF should maintain good communication and full consultation with national Governments, taking account of the situations and needs of various countries.

187. A group of delegations commended UNICEF for outlining targeted gender-equality priorities and identifying how gender equality would be mainstreamed in all strategic plan outcome areas. UNICEF was encouraged to ensure that the targeted Gender Action Plan areas are well integrated within the work of existing programming teams, with support from the Gender Unit, rather than create parallel teams or efforts.

188. Delegations expressed support for the targeted gender equality priority areas, particularly child marriage, as well as adolescent girls' health, secondary education and gender-based violence in emergencies. They encouraged UNICEF to more concretely identify strategies and activities to support this work.

189. Several delegations suggested that UNICEF continue to address gender-based violence in all areas of its work, to include men and boys in efforts to combat such violence and achieve gender equality, and address core societal structures to prevent gender-based violence and discrimination against girls and women.

190. One delegation said that education interventions should include programmes in schools to ensure that children and women, particularly young people and adolescents, are able to exercise their rights. The actions proposed concerning HIV/AIDS, female genital mutilation/cutting and HPV vaccination were aligned with the needs and public health challenges facing children and adolescents. Young people must be able to realize their sexual and reproductive rights so that they can make responsible and autonomous decisions regarding their own bodies, their fertility and the transmission of sexual diseases. Prevention of adolescent pregnancy, including further refinement of indicators, was a priority.

191. A group of delegations said that the lack of a results framework within the strategic priority action plan for gender equality end-of-cycle review made it nearly impossible to determine impact. It is therefore critical that the Gender Action Plan is built around a robust results framework and plan for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, with ambitious yet realistic targets, measurable indicators and evidence-based baselines. Speakers welcomed UNICEF efforts to promote and build capacity for disaggregated data — especially gender-sensitive indicators. UNICEF results need to be disaggregated by region, sex and age in order to better assess impact, needs and vulnerability.

192. A number of delegations requested greater detail on resource allocation for the Gender Action Plan. They encouraged UNICEF ensure predictability of funding and sustainability of internal technical support for gender equality. One group of delegations welcomed the planned investment of an additional $12 million in core resources (for a total of $19 million) for Gender Action Plan implementation and asked for greater clarity on how this would be used. It remained unclear whether the work supported through the Gender Thematic Fund would stand on its own as separate programming or be integrated within the work of existing programme teams.

193. A group of delegations said that an appropriate and sufficient allocation of financial resources was necessary, noting that the UNICEF integrated budget presented to the Executive Board in September 2013 failed to show planned

allocation for gender. They acknowledged UNICEF efforts to respond to these concerns by setting a 15 per cent benchmark of overall expenditures for gender by 2017, to be achieved by investing $19 million in core resources, raising contributions throughout the Gender Thematic Fund, and using sectoral and thematic funds to mainstream gender. This benchmark, however, should not distract attention from the gender-equitable allocation of all resources. The delegations expressed concern about the Gender Action Plan's heavy reliance on other resources.

D. Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation (item 6)

(a) Draft country programme documents

194. The President announced that the Executive Board would discuss eight draft country programme documents and one area programme document. In addition, a document containing reasons for extensions of ongoing country programmes was presented to the Executive Board.

195. In accordance with decision 2008/17, the Board was informed of the reasons for deferment to the second regular session of 2014 (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.11) for the presentation of five draft country programme documents, for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ecuador, Guatemala, Iraq and Paraguay. The presentation of the draft country programme document for Mali was deferred to the first regular session of 2015.

196. The Director, Programme Division, introduced the proposed country programmes and extensions of ongoing country programmes.

197. A speaker said her delegation applauded the efforts of UNICEF in infant, child, adolescent and maternal health and would like to see more detail on the activities undertaken to enable the Executive Board to assess their probability of success. Benchmarks should be set and monitored regularly so that country programmes could be adjusted in order to achieve agreed goals in child and maternal health and well-being.

East Asia and the Pacific

198. The country programme document for Timor-Leste (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.3) was presented by the Regional Director.

199. The representative of Timor-Leste commended the work done and confirmed that the country programme document was in alignment with the Timorese National Strategy Development Plan. The Government supported the four mutually reinforcing strategies outlined in the country programme and stressed the need for continued technical and financial support from UNICEF for capacity-building and service delivery.

Eastern and Southern Africa

200. The country programme documents for Angola, Comoros and Kenya (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.4-E/ICEF/2014/P/L.6) were presented by the Regional Director. The country programme document for Kenya was presented, on an exceptional basis, for discussion and approval at the annual session.

201. The representative of Angola said the country programme document was in line with the country's development priorities. The Government was committed to achieving the results outlined in the country programme, specifically those of decreasing child and maternal mortality, expanding the birth registration and the vital statistics system, and expanding the large-scale social assistance scheme to vulnerable families.

202. The representative of Kenya thanked UNICEF for being a close partner since Independence. She noted that the country programme document was anchored in the UNDAF and fully aligned with national priorities. It is an ambitious plan, one on which UNICEF can deliver. It was recommended that the principle of efficiency and effectiveness guide implementation of the country programme, and that the UNICEF country team strengthen its results management tools and demonstrate value for investment.

203. A delegation welcomed the encouraging results achieved in Kenya despite challenges. UNICEF was one of the most efficient United Nations agencies in terms of effectiveness, including delivering and reporting on results. The delegation requested more information on how the country office intended to enhance its results-based management and implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers, especially for monitoring of implementing partners.

Latin America and the Caribbean

204. The country programme document for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.2) was presented by the Regional Director.

205. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela said that the country programme was an opportunity for the Government to continue working with UNICEF to ensure comprehensive protection for children. The programme would benefit the design and implementation of policies on health and protection of children and young people, and also focus on education.

206. A delegation expressed support for the country programme, which was aligned with the Government's bilateral assistance to Venezuela.

Middle East and North Africa

207. The country programme document for Tunisia (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.8) and the area programme document for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the State of Palestine (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.7) were presented by the Regional Director.

208. The representative of Tunisia expressed satisfaction with the preparation process for the country programme document. She emphasized the gains made for children in Tunisia, noting that the provision in the new Constitution on the rights of children demonstrated the commitment to children in all development plans and actions involving the country's development.

209. The representative of Lebanon said that the continuous increase in the number of refugees entering the country posed humanitarian challenges that exceeded the capacities of Lebanon to handle them. Lebanon appreciated the partnership with UNICEF to rebuild institutions and achieve peace and stability as a framework for the enjoyment of human rights for all.

210. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that during the current crisis the Government had cooperated with UNICEF, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other humanitarian agencies to support Palestinian and Syrian children. The Government reiterated its intention to facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance to all affected civilians inside the Syrian Arab Republic.

211. The representative of the State of Palestine thanked UNICEF for its assistance to Palestinian children and women. She called for greater attention to the situation of Palestinian refugees in neighbouring countries. Achievement of the goals set forth in the area programme document will ameliorate the hardships faced by Palestinian children and women.

212. Referring to the memorandum of understanding between UNICEF and UNRWA mentioned in paragraph 23 of the area programme document, a delegation said it would be important to verify how efficiently UNICEF implemented its programme, how each project was implemented in collaboration with UNRWA, and the extent to which synergy was created.

South Asia

213. The country programme document for Afghanistan (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.9) was presented by the Regional Director.

214. The representative of Afghanistan paid tribute to the two UNICEF staff members who had been killed in the recent explosion in Kabul. His Government appreciated the support of UNICEF in his country's development efforts, especially as the country is embarking on its transformation decade. The Government welcomed the new country programme, particularly its overall goal to address inequality in the most deprived areas of Afghanistan. He underlined the importance of scaling up nutrition and protection in the next programme.

215. A group of delegations welcomed the alignment of the country programme document with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and UNDAF and the clear linkages between humanitarian action and long-term development, including resilience work. They encouraged UNICEF to strengthen the overall focus on child protection. Given the dependence of UNICEF on local partners for programme implementation, they requested information on risk mitigation and implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers.

West and Central Africa

216. The country programme document for Sierra Leone (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.10) was presented by the Regional Director.

217. The representative of Sierra Leone said the proposed country programme, which would improve the lives of children and protect children's rights, was in line with the Agenda for Prosperity and the UNDAF. Highlighting gains made for children and women in reducing maternal mortality and increasing enrolment in primary education, she noted that country faced myriad challenges, particularly in the areas of capacity-building, building resilience, building a protective environment for children and supporting social protection.

218. A delegation noted the participatory process behind the elaboration of the country programme. The delegation recommended that UNICEF address the recommendations made in other documents, including the evaluation of community management of acute malnutrition and the findings of internal audit reports, and integrate risk management into planning and implementation.

219. Commending UNICEF for its work on the country programme document, another delegation noted that protection received fewer resources than health care and nutrition, and asked about the allocation of resources in the document.

(b) Extensions of ongoing country programmes

220. The Director, Programme Division presented document E/ICEF/2014/P/L.11.

221. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2014/7, 2014/9 and 2014/14 (see annex III).

E. Evaluation (item 7)
Annual report on the evaluation function and major evaluations in UNICEF, and management perspective

222. The report (E/ICEF/2014/12) was presented by the Director, Evaluation. The management response (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.13) was presented by the Deputy Executive Director, Management.

223. A group of four delegations expressed appreciation for the comprehensive report on the evaluation function, including the description of the rich evaluation activities at decentralized levels within UNICEF. They expressed continued support for UNICEF efforts to facilitate learning between regions. It was important to provide adequate human resources for ensure good-quality evaluations and well-managed processes and to maintain the independence of the Evaluation Office.

224. As UNICEF had said in informal consultations prior to the session, further work was needed in integrating — systematically — gender equality and human-rights-based approaches in evaluations. The delegations were pleased that the evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development had been taken into account in the revised evaluation policy. The evaluations presented to the Executive Board this year were of good quality but could have more directly addressed whether or not the goals of the programmes had been achieved.

225. The engagement of UNICEF in system-wide and inter-agency evaluation efforts was welcome. The delegations encouraged UNICEF to give more emphasis to collaboration and coordination with other United Nations agencies. For reasons of accountability, they encouraged UNICEF and the other participating agencies to present the management responses to joint evaluations to their respective Executive Boards. They welcomed the good work conducted by EvalPartners, which was now administered by UN-Women. They also welcomed the work of UNICEF on improving evaluation of humanitarian action and expressed appreciation for the focus on child protection.

226. A delegation said that for evaluations to be truly constructive, they must be timely, and adequate time for monitoring should be allocated. There must be good

communication with those responsible for programmes that are being evaluated. National evaluators who were familiar with national programmes were preferable to evaluators from the outside who did not always understand the factors involved. National capacity-building was another important element. UNICEF was asked about the methodology for selecting the programmes to be evaluated.

Evaluation synthesis report, and management response

227. The evaluation synthesis report on community management of acute malnutrition was presented by the Director, Evaluation, and the management response was presented by the Director, Programmes.

228. A group of five delegations expressed support for the overall recommendation that UNICEF continue to support community management of acute malnutrition as a viable approach to preventing and addressing severe acute malnutrition. They favoured using a holistic approach, which included prevention as well as treatment. Prevention would be supported through strengthening community outreach and management of moderate acute malnutrition management. The delegations were encouraged by the degree to which community management of acute malnutrition had been integrated into national health systems. To ensure the sustainability, cost-effectiveness and efficiency of community management of acute malnutrition, it was also important to promote domestic financing and the appropriate use of ready-to-use therapeutic food by caregivers and clinics.

229. A 2013 study funded by two of the delegations had identified a role for donor agencies to make available funding that allowed for longer-term support for community management of acute malnutrition outside of crisis mechanisms. This was in line with better linking relief and development programmes. Because coordination among stakeholders was key to scaling up nutrition interventions, the delegations welcomed the actions included in the management response related to lowering the costs of ready-to-use therapeutic food and strengthening a joint vision on acute malnutrition among UNICEF, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, implementing partners and ministries of health.

230. Another speaker encouraged UNICEF to consider how the content of the synthesis report could be shared for further discussion and follow-up at the international conference on nutrition in November 2014.

231. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/10 (see annex III).

F. Internal audit and investigations (item 8)

232. The Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2013 annual report to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.2) was presented by the Director, Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI). The management response to the report (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.3) was presented by the Deputy Executive Director, Management. The annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee was available on the Executive Board website.

233. Delegations said the work of OIAI was essential to safeguard the quality of the delivery of resources and programmes by UNICEF, and expressed appreciation for the increased number of internal audits and investigations. UNICEF management was commended for greater follow-up to recommendations from previous years. The

overall ratings introduced by UNICEF for conducted audits gave a better overall picture of audit results. UNICEF was encouraged to participate in joint and inter-agency audits when relevant, and was commended for continuing to implement the policy of disclosure of internal audits reports. More information on the completed investigations would contribute to even greater transparency.

234. Audits were not always positive, it was said, and showed weaknesses that should be addressed. Quite a number of country offices, particularly in Africa, received qualified statements. The delegations were confident from the management response that UNICEF was taking the necessary measure to address those recommendations. The harmonized approach to cash transfers was a priority.

235. Delegations supported efforts by OIAI to strengthen its investigative capacity, particularly regarding allegations concerning third parties working with UNICEF. Nonetheless, UNICEF had a low capacity in this area compared to UNFPA and UNDP, and delegations requested information on the number of additional personnel proposed and costs involved in strengthening the OIAI investigative capacity. OIAI must have the resources needed to fulfil its mandate, and UNICEF should consider this in relation to the midterm review of the integrated budget.

236. A group of delegations said that internal audits report drew the same conclusions as those of the United Nations Board of Auditors, discussed at the first regular session of 2014, about the high risks regarding governance, internal control and results-based management and on steps taken to address the challenges in relation to implementing partners. They had high expectations in this regard for the new Deputy Executive Director position.

237. Delegations expressed appreciation for the new policy prohibiting and combating fraud and corruption and for its having been made publicly available. They encouraged UNICEF to include more information on anti-corruption measures, risk assessments and risk management in future OIAI reports, and to work towards a common approach to these issues with other funds and programmes. UNICEF was urged to continue its rigorous pursuit of any and all misappropriated funds.

238. Delegations expressed support for the recommendations of the Audit Advisory Committee to revise the 2009 accountability framework. They looked forward to progress in implementing crucial audit recommendations, including those on the updated staff rotation policy and the strategy to develop donor reporting at the global level.

239. The UNICEF Executive Director said that UNICEF has taken steps to clarify the lines of responsibility from headquarters to the regional and country offices. The new position of Deputy Executive Director will be responsible for strengthening this line of management accountability. In addition, UNICEF will be providing additional resources to OIAI and will take the need for resources into account in the midterm review of the integrated budget.

240. The Director, OIAI, emphasized that UNICEF has gone beyond a reasonable level of assurance to provide advice office by office, and function by function, to improve operations. UNICEF will continue to stay vigilant regarding the harmonized approach to cash transfers so that resources are used to achieve the greatest impact possible for children.

241. On the harmonized approach to cash transfers, the Deputy Executive Director explained that UNICEF was bolstering its capacity for oversight in all regions. Regarding additional capacity for OIAI, he said $350,000 a year would be given to OIAI, through the attrition of other posts. UNICEF will continue to pursue misappropriated funds through legal and other channels, and will strengthen risk management, including through the structure of the new Deputy Executive Director.

242. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/11 (see annex III).

G. Report of the Ethics Office (item 9)

243. The report (E/ICEF/2014/11) was introduced by the Principal Adviser, Ethics.

244. A group of delegations expressed appreciation for the leadership of the Executive Director and the Ethics Office in fostering a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability at UNICEF. They welcomed the actions taken by the Office to develop more systemic support to staff in identifying and resolving conflicts of interest, and commended efforts to improve and expand the ethics training programme. Because these innovations had led to increased requests for advice and additional training support, UNICEF should continue to modify its training to meet the evolving needs of country offices, especially those in more complex humanitarian areas. There should also be periodic testing to measure the effectiveness of these training programmes.

245. The Office's efforts to foster a culture of "speaking up" at UNICEF were welcome, as was the inclusion of a management indicator on this issue in the strategic plan. The fact that some staff members expressed fear or frustration about speaking up highlighted the importance of an effective policy on protection against retaliation for promoting accountability and transparency. Training on protection of whistle-blowers throughout the organization is essential, and the online basic ethics awareness course should be mandatory for all staff, not just those at the level of P-5 and above.

246. Regarding harmonization, the delegations asked how the various United Nations ethics offices are coordinated and how they relate to the central United Nations Ethics Office, specifically in terms of its setting of standards and oversight functions. They also requested more information on how the UNICEF Ethics Office was measuring its own effectiveness and progress against expected results.

247. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/12 (see annex III).

H. Creation of a fourth position of Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director in UNICEF in the context of strengthened management for results across the organization (item 10)

248. The proposal (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.4) was presented by the Chief of Staff.

249. A group of delegations welcomed the proposal and recognized its potential benefits. They requested more information, and perhaps consultations, on the organizational changes that would accompany the creation of the new post. They expected the headquarters reorganization to lead to a more efficient, less hierarchical organization with greater quality assurance of results and coordinated

management. They expected the fourth Deputy Executive Director to support oversight of the implementation of important audit and evaluation recommendations, strengthen governance and internal controls, and support strong relationships with implementing partners. They requested that the secretariat update the Executive Board prior to the annual session of 2015 on the structural and governance changes within UNICEF, including clarification of reporting lines, responsibilities, new accountabilities and the other effectiveness and efficiency initiatives presented in the proposal.

250. Another delegation said that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had created a similar post for field services, which had resulted in increased efficiencies.

251. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/13 (see annex III).

I. Address by the Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff Association (item 11)

252. The Chairperson said that the results described in the Executive Director's annual report had been achieved through the hard work and sacrifice of staff at all levels, often under extreme challenges. Overall, the relationship between staff and senior management was good and the Executive Director made an effort to address staff issues and concerns brought to his attention. Nonetheless, the staff had several concerns, particularly the reorganization and restructuring currently under way. More could be done to address the issue of loss of jobs.

253. The most critical issue facing staff was their safety and security, especially in the field and in dangerous and hardship duty locations. It was time for a comprehensive review of the working conditions and conditions of service for staff working in dangerous locations, including in combat zones. Issues of particular concern were a residential security allowance for locally recruited staff in hazardous locations; rest and recuperation for international staff; and harmonization of the danger pay allowance.

254. Throughout the organization, staff morale was affected by the concern about job losses and by a lack of diversity, especially regarding women and nationals of programme countries. Increasing the opportunities available to local staff for professional growth, promotion and mobility would help to address these concerns.

J. Other matters (item 12)

Provisional list of agenda items

255. The Secretary of the Executive Board introduced the provisional list of agenda items for the 2014 second regular session of the Executive Board, scheduled to take place from 9 to 12 September.

K. Adoption of draft decisions (item 13)

256. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2014/5 to 2014/14 (see annex III).

L. UNICEF Staff Awards and closing statements by the Executive Director and the President of the Executive Board (item 14)

257. The Executive Director announced the winners of the 2014 UNICEF Staff Awards: (a) the 23 colleagues in UNICEF Kidugli Zone Office in the Sudan, for their work related to "business continuity for children"; (b) the Division of Communication and Programme Division's Child Protection Section, for their ground-breaking collaboration on the "End Violence against Children" campaign; and (c) the staff of the UNICEF office in the Syrian Arab Republic, who were working in a terrible humanitarian crisis, now in its fourth year.

258. In his closing remarks, the Executive Director said that staff were at the heart of everything the Executive Board had discussed at the session. He paid tribute to several staff members who were retiring or changing posts. During the focus session on the children of Africa, he had been reminded that more than 5,000 UNICEF staff were serving throughout Africa, a majority of them national staff. He agreed with the Global Staff Association President that UNICEF had to reflect equity internally through better gender and geographic balance. The report of the Ethics Office was a reminder of how all staff members, whether drivers or directors, were entitled to equal respect, support and concern for their security in an increasingly dangerous world.

259. The President said the presence of so many high-level representatives, particularly Her Majesty Queen Sofia of Spain and the First Lady of Burkina Faso, was a testimony to the importance of the work of UNICEF. The quality of the discussion during the special focus session on Africa showed that there was a real appetite among Member States and among UNICEF constituencies, Governments, National Committees, staff and civil society for substantive, analytical and reality-driven discussion and exchange of views at the Executive Board. The world needed to achieve transformative outcomes for its children, and the "business as usual" approach was simply not ambitious enough. The time had come for Governments to lead in all countries, and UNICEF, a "great and exemplary organization", must accompany them on this journey.

Part three
Second regular session of 2014

Held at United Nations Headquarters from
9 to 12 September 2014

I. Organization of the session

A. Opening statements

260. The President said that in the last three months, instability and illness had again made children innocent victims of forces beyond their control or understanding. Children continued to face challenges in South Sudan, Somalia, Mali, the Central African Republic, Gaza, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine. In West Africa, the Ebola virus continued to spread among doctors and other health workers, community leaders and the general population, in countries where health resources were already strained.

261. Although the cause of the Ebola outbreak and the reasons for its present proportions were not fully understood, the causes that were known were rooted in the poor capacities of the affected countries for managing, preventing, responding to, diagnosing and treating such diseases. This was a stark reminder that long-term funding for strengthening health systems across the developing world remained a challenge for the international community and for UNICEF.

262. He commended the Executive Director and the UNICEF staff who were working under extremely difficult circumstances for their tireless work. In particular, he recognized the work done by Supply Division, which had sent record amounts of medical supplies to West Africa to fight the Ebola outbreak, and the country office staff in Sierra Leone and Liberia, who had ramped up their efforts to deliver those supplies to populations in need. In Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, UNICEF had delivered humanitarian supplies to families fleeing conflict and in Gaza, UNICEF was already working to help children resume their education after a terrible and morally and ethically devastating conflict. Likewise, in South Sudan, Somalia, Ukraine and the Central Africa Republic, UNICEF staff had done sterling work.

263. An important reason to speak of hope was the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In every region of the world, the Convention had inspired changes in laws and practice that had improved the lives of millions of children. UNICEF continued to be a leader in the fight for children's rights, both in the field and in the realm of policy, data, research, evaluation and the focus on equity. Even as the world celebrated this important anniversary, much more remained to be done and UNICEF must remain a leader in those efforts. Children must be at the centre of and benefit from the post-2015 development agenda.

264. The Executive Director said that despite the world's attention and efforts, the list of crises was growing longer every day. While some emergencies captured public attention, others did not. Parties to conflict were ignoring international humanitarian law and engaging in acts that resulted in massive civilian casualties. The world must never forget that each life lost, whether from conflict, disease or disaster, was a heart-breaking loss for a family and a shadow over collective hopes for the future. The reverse was also true. Each life saved was a child who could contribute to his community and country. The imperative to save and nurture every child drove UNICEF staff and their partners in some of the most dangerous and difficult places in the world.

265. Last year, UNICEF and its partners had responded to 289 humanitarian situations in 83 countries. These included persistent humanitarian crises resulting from conflict and instability in the Syrian Arab Republic, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Afghanistan, as well as natural disasters in the Philippines and new crises in Ukraine and Somalia. Last month, Supply Division had shipped 1,000 metric tons of lifesaving supplies for children affected by crises around the world, the largest one-month supply operation in the organization's history.

266. The Ebola emergency had quickly become the top priority of UNICEF. In affected countries, Ebola was not only a health crisis in itself but was also having serious effects on vaccination programmes and thus, in the longer run, on under-five mortality, education, protection, nutrition and other areas of child welfare. Except for a few organizations like Médecins Sans Frontières and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the world had been far too slow to act. UNICEF continued to work with partners to inform and educate communities, equip health facilities, support infection control and protect heath workers battling this disease, but it was not nearly enough. This was a global challenge, requiring an urgent response. UNICEF and partners must help governments and community workers on the ground in affected countries.

267. UNICEF was increasingly stretched as an organization, forced to shift staff from one critical area to another as it scrambled to cover gaps in new and chronic emergencies. Staff members, especially in non-family duty stations and national staff, were working in difficult conditions. A central priority was to keep all staff secure, especially when the United Nations was increasingly targeted and the resources to protect them were strained.

268. The issue of resources was critical. Despite growth of 62 per cent in income for emergencies in 2013, the escalating demand was fast outstripping current capacities. Similarly, UNICEF had been mobilizing staff to surge capacities for emergency responses in West Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Africa. This approach of "robbing Peter to pay Paul" was not sustainable. UNICEF could not continue this stopgap approach without it negatively affecting long-term development work, particularly in fragile states. UNICEF must remain committed to its development mission, to saving children in emergencies, to its universal mandate in high-, middle- and low-income countries and improving its management practices, but because of the emergencies, it was increasingly difficult to do so.

269. These challenges raised questions about UNICEF and its humanitarian and development missions. Rather than balancing long-term development and short-term emergency response, UNICEF should be integrating the two. Organizationally, UNICEF had made structural changes to better integrate humanitarian action with long-term development goals and more closely align immediate actions with those aimed at longer-term results. The Strengthening Humanitarian Action Initiative included a proposed humanitarian learning strategy and framework, to provide minimum humanitarian training for all staff and improve managers' skills to lead in unexpected crises; an expansion of the Emergency Response Team; and renewed partnerships with rising humanitarian actors to expand the pool of available human and financial resources for humanitarian responses globally. Human resources policies and staff benefits, such as danger pay and housing allowances, would also

remain of fundamental importance, not only for staff welfare, but to strengthen the incentives for UNICEF staff members to serve in emergencies.

270. Several speakers, including the delegation speaking on behalf of the African Group of States, spoke of the need to accelerate the response to the Ebola outbreak. The crisis brought into sharp focus a failure of the international community to invest in systems capable of handling increasingly complex emergencies. Speakers agreed with the outbreak being the organization's top priority, saying that UNICEF had the trust of local officials and communities.

271. Delegations expressed appreciation for the vital work done by UNICEF staff to meet children's needs in humanitarian emergencies. They agreed that there is an increasing need to link short-term emergency response with long-term development efforts and expressed support for UNICEF efforts to respond to this need, including changes in the headquarters structure and the Strengthening Humanitarian Action initiative. Speakers also urged UNICEF to further strengthen and develop partnerships with other United Nations agencies and other partners in the field, and to increase its advocacy in humanitarian contexts. In the context of the changing humanitarian landscape, UNICEF should ask if its current approaches, structures and responsibilities were still relevant, effective and efficient, and be bold and innovative, particularly in the context of the World Humanitarian Summit.

272. A delegation expressed appreciation for UNICEF efforts to strengthen capacities for rapid and scaled humanitarian response, including the nomination of an increasing number of high-calibre candidates for the humanitarian coordinator pool. UNICEF was encouraged to continue prioritizing the development of its human resource capacity so it could draw quickly and effectively on that capacity where most needed.

273. Several speakers stressed the importance of improving protection of children in emergencies and efforts to combat and prevent violence against children, including through inter-agency human-rights-based advocacy, addressing impunity and increased use of data.

274. A delegation said that the unprecedented challenges around the world underlined the importance of a well-coordinated United Nations response to emergencies. UNICEF was urged to support the development of "a whole of Syria" needs response and gap analysis which hopefully will lead to a single humanitarian appeal by December 2014. It was vital that agencies use the full scope of Security Council resolution 2165 to reach all those in need. This included expanding the scale and reach of United Nations operations and increasing support to NGOs across border operations. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that the Syrian Government had not and would not prevent the distribution of humanitarian assistance, including medicine and health supplies, to its people, especially children.

275. A speaker emphasized the seriousness of the challenges from climate change that were affecting children. UNICEF was commended for its humanitarian work in the Pacific region and encouraged to work with other United Nations agencies and humanitarian actors to advance understanding of the unique characteristics of the region, including its vulnerability to natural disasters. In the context of the recent Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Samoa, a delegation said that the issues pertinent to UNICEF work in the region were food, security and nutrition, water and sanitation, health and non-communicable diseases.

Another delegation stressed the importance of human security, particularly protection and empowerment of vulnerable people.

276. Commenting on the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a group of States said that the anniversary represented an opportunity to celebrate achievements in improving the welfare and well-being of children around the world, but also called for reflection on the remaining challenges and disparities facing children throughout the world. Several speakers spoke of the importance of ratifying the optional protocols to the Convention.

277. Several speakers spoke of the importance of including the rights of children and adolescents in the post-2015 development framework, and expressed appreciation for the leadership shown by UNICEF in this regard.

278. UNICEF was commended for its innovative and successful fundraising efforts and for the new online open platform designed to increase transparency through tracking of programme outcomes and resources. The organization's strong financial situation, with total revenue reaching an all-time high of $4.9 billion, was a testament to its hard work on partnerships but also to the integrity and enduring value and urgent need for the work of UNICEF.

279. A group of States expressed support for the work of UNICEF in middle-income countries and stressed the importance of UNICEF having a physical presence in all such countries, especially for creating synergies with other stakeholders, including for South-South cooperation.

B. Adoption of the agenda

280. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2014/14) for the session.

281. In accordance with rule 50.2 and the annex of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 35 observer delegations, including 1 intergovernmental organization, 1 NGO and 6 National Committees for UNICEF.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Proposed programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2015 (agenda item 3)

282. The proposed programme of work for the Executive Board sessions in 2015 (E/ICEF/2014/15) was introduced by the Secretary of the Executive Board.

283. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/16 (see annex III).

B. Structured dialogue on financing results of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017, and critical mass of core resources (agenda item 4)

284. The Executive Board had before it a report on the critical mass of core resources (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.27). Following introductory remarks by the Deputy Executive Director, External Affairs, presentations were made by the Director, Policy and Strategy and the Director, Public Partnerships.

285. Delegations welcomed UNICEF efforts to consult Member States in line with the resolutions of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. They commended UNICEF for engaging other New York-based funds and programmes in identifying some basic principles to define critical mass of resources and to elaborate strategies for sustainable funding of United Nations development agendas, while taking into account the uniqueness of each agency and the need to demonstrate performance and results as part of their resource mobilization efforts. Speakers encouraged UNICEF to continue its discussions with the other United Nations agencies on good practices for improved and better quality funding, whether for core or non-core resources.

286. Many delegations said that the structured dialogue should continue beyond 2014 and be an annual event, at the same time as the annual reviews of the financial situation, because the concept of critical mass would evolve over time, together with funding trends. Accompanied by informal consultations, future structured dialogues should address such an evolution of concepts and estimates over the course of implementation of the strategic plan. This ongoing discussion would better prepare UNICEF for the midterm review of the integrated budget, including the implementation of the cost-recovery methodology, and also assist donors in making more informed funding decisions.

287. A group of delegations stressed that core contributions are and should remain the bedrock of UNICEF funding; this was a prerequisite if UNICEF was to be strategic, responsive and predictable in its delivery of results at the request of programme countries. They welcomed that UNICEF was working hard to increase its donor base but said that the continuous imbalance between core and non-core funding was a real concern. Another speaker said that it was important to increase the volume of resources and improve the quality of funding from existing and future donors, both private and public. This would entail shifting the funding structure towards more flexibility and predictability, ultimately culminating in a resource mobilization strategy with clear targets and concrete measures, as had been done for private fundraising partnerships.

288. UNICEF was urged to develop incentives for Member States to provide core contributions. Such incentives could include greater visibility, recognition, better results reporting and more strategic partnerships with providers of core funding at global, regional and country levels. Another important aspect was the range/scope of incentives, mechanisms and funding windows to facilitate a shift from restricted to more flexible non-core funding. The latter was defined as funding that was provided to UNICEF in a predictable manner, was minimally earmarked so that UNICEF could invest these resources where they were most needed and generated the greatest results, and was aligned with the priorities set by the Executive Board.

289. Several delegations stressed the importance of identifying the best mix of core and high quality non-core resources needed to fund the results of the strategic plan

and national priorities as manifested through country programmes, and of having UNICEF — and its decentralized country offices — ensure that all resources received were aligned with the strategic plan.

290. Other issues raised included how to rapidly adapt the UNICEF funding strategy to the ever-changing funding situation, how to best fulfil the need for a closer link between humanitarian action and development in the funding strategy and how to leverage Delivering as One by the funds and programmes, including in the area of financing.

291. The predictability of financing and more flexible resources could be increased when the needs and interests of donors were addressed, it was said. Donors often preferred earmarked funding because they want to confirm the effects of their donations. National legislative bodies that approved budgets required concrete result of the previous year's contributions to regular resources. In this context, speakers welcomed the work undertaken by UNICEF to develop a publicly-accessible online platform for tracking results and resources, which would improve accountability and oversight, increase transparency and convince donors to contribute more flexible resources. UNICEF was encouraged to continue improving the quality of reporting and tracking of results, linked to financial resources and expenditures, including increased visibility of contributors to core funding. A group of delegations said that risk management needed additional attention.

292. A delegation said that although it saw the merit of maintaining the minimum level of flexible resources, it was still necessary to allow options for donors from both the public and private sectors to choose the UNICEF programmes — country, regional or global — to which they wish to contribute. This was particularly valid for some middle-income countries which had both a growing donor base, particularly in the private sector, and a large number of needy children within the country who could benefit from UNICEF development and humanitarian activities.

293. One delegation said that international agencies were studying the entire system of assigning resources to developing countries at a time when many of the commitments undertaken in the past to help developing countries were "a mere fantasy". Often the interests of the donors were not a national priority for these countries, so programme implementation was often postponed. The speaker encourage UNICEF to continue to play a role in mobilizing core resources and in maintaining the universal and multilateral nature of its programmes, in order to meet the needs of developing countries.

294. Another delegation commended UNICEF for its forward-looking private fundraising strategy to broaden its donor base, and suggested that UNICEF draw on its powerful brand image to reach "people on the street". The recent "ice bucket challenge" phenomenon not only showed the willingness of people to participate in a good cause but also the potential of SMS for fundraising. In collaboration with National Committees, UNICEF could develop innovative tools to inspire and encourage people, companies and philanthropic organizations to support its mission. Another speaker urged UNICEF to tap into the potential of the business sector and to include it in discussions about new funding modalities.

295. Several delegations commented on the issue of a critical mass of core resources in their statements at the opening of the session. A delegation said that the structured dialogues initiated by General Assembly resolution 67/226 of

21 December 2012 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development offered an opportunity to define the common principles for Member States and agencies which would allow them to consolidate their financial bases and improve their effectiveness and efficiency. UNICEF was commended for its efforts to develop the dialogue around this issue. The ongoing structured dialogue should help to identify innovative and effective ways to diversity the donor base and increase core contributions, as part of a comprehensive effort to improve financing which would include flexibility, predictability, other types of resources and better use of thematic funds. A delegation welcomed UNICEF efforts to expand and strengthen partnerships with the private sector nationally and globally.

296. One speaker said that the critical mass should reflect all of the resources necessary for agencies to deliver the results agreed on in their strategic plans and integrated budgets. Another delegation stressed that it contributed substantially to both core and non-core resources, which were both important. Another speaker said that debates on funding modalities and incentives to increase the percentage of core resources were important for the preservation of the intergovernmental character of UNICEF. Partnerships with the private sector were vital but must not come at the expense of strengthened governance and a better balance between core and non-core resources.

297. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/17 (see annex III).

C. Programme cooperation (agenda item 5)

(a) Approval of revised country and area programme documents (agenda item 5a)

298. The President said that at the annual session in June, the Board had reviewed and discussed the draft country programme documents for Afghanistan, Angola, Comoros, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, Tunisia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as well as the area programme for Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the State of Palestine. In response to the comments made by Board members at that session, the draft country programme documents had been revised in consultation with the Governments, as appropriate, and posted on the UNICEF website within six weeks of the annual session. The revised documents would be approved on a no-objection basis unless at least five members of the Board had informed the secretariat in writing that they wished to bring a particular country programme to the Executive Board for further discussion. As the secretariat had not received any such requests, the Executive Board approved the eight programme documents.

(b) Country programme documents (agenda item 5b)

299. The President reviewed the new procedure for approval of country programmes as decided by the Board in decision 2014/1, under which country programme documents would be considered and approved at one session on a no-objection basis. Drafts of the country programme documents to be considered at this session had been posted on the Executive Board website from 16 June to 7 July 2014 in order to give members of the Executive Board an opportunity to comment on them. The secretariat had received some comments, which had been shared with the respective country and regional offices and Governments and incorporated, as

appropriate, in the final version of documents now before the Board. A costed evaluation plan for each country programme and the UNDAF results matrices, where applicable, were available through the Executive Board website. The country programme documents were to be considered and approved on a no-objection basis. There would be further discussion only if at least five Executive Board members had informed the secretariat in writing of their wish to do so. The secretariat has received no such requests.

300. The Director, Programmes made some general comments about the four country programme documents. Two delegations said that components like risk assessment, results monitoring and mainstreaming of crosscutting issues were crucial for the effective operationalization of country programmes. However, these issues were only briefly touched upon in the country programme documents and it was difficult to see where in the elaboration process they had been considered.

Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

301. The Regional Director introduced the country programme document for Bosnia and Herzegovina (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.12).

302. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomed the UNICEF commitment to the human-rights-based approach to development, which was reflected in the country programme document. The overall goal of the country programme was to accelerate the universal realization of child rights by fostering greater social inclusion, especially of the most vulnerable and excluded children and families, as well as child victims of all form of violence and exploitation, divisions and disasters. She expressed appreciation for the support provided by UNICEF during the unprecedented flood and landslides in May 2014.

Latin America and the Caribbean

303. The Regional Director presented the country programme documents for Ecuador, Guatemala and Paraguay (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.13-E/ICEF/2014/P/L.15).

304. The representative of Ecuador said that the country programme was based on the priorities established by the Government in its national development plan, which itself was based on rights and justice and placed human beings above capital. He reiterated his Government's commitment to cooperating with UNICEF and stressed the importance of strengthening both the United Nations system and efforts in the area of early childhood development.

305. The representative of Guatemala said that the country programme focused on the Government's priority areas of social inclusion, the protection of children and adolescents, education for life and a healthy start in life. UNICEF would also support a multisectoral approach focused on the first 1,000 days of a child's life. The Government was concerned about the modest amount of regular resources for the programme, given the problems facing the country, especially the chronic malnutrition affecting many children.

306. Two delegations said that programme rationale clearly described the need for continued and strong UNICEF cooperation in Guatemala. Two decades after the peace accords, children of indigenous origin were among the most vulnerable and marginalized population groups. It was important that UNICEF monitor and document the situation of indigenous children and systematically address the

underlying causes. More indigenous children must complete basic education and continue on to secondary and higher education. To ensure the quality of bilingual education, it was important to use the lessons learned from the Mayan Joint Programme, which had resulted in standards and models for bilingual education, including the necessary participation of parents, particularly mothers, in children's education. To secure growth and long-term national support for the new five-year programme, UNICEF should continue building strong partnerships with the public and private sectors, civil society and other international cooperation agencies.

307. The representative of Paraguay said that the country programme was in line with the priorities of the National Development Plan for 2014-2030, especially the reduction of poverty and enhancement of social development. The Government was committed in particular to reducing chronic infant malnutrition and infant and maternal mortality, and to increasing secondary education coverage.

308. The Executive Board approved the four country programmes in decision 2014/15 (see annex III).

(c) Extensions of ongoing country programmes (item 5c)

309. The President stated that in accordance with its decision 2009/11, the Executive Board was informed of the one-year extensions of the country programme for Iraq and of the common country programme for the United Republic of Tanzania. It was also requested to approve the two-year extension of the country programme for Botswana; a two-month extension, following two one-year extensions, for Mali; and a nine-month extension, following a two-year extension, for Colombia. These requests were discussed in document E/ICEF/2014/P/L.16.

310. The representative of Colombia said that the extension would allow the Government to finalize its new development plan, which would form the basis for the UNDAF and the new UNICEF programme of cooperation, as well as the programmes of other United Nations agencies in the country.

311. The Executive Board approved the requests in decision 2014/18 (see annex III).

D. Global thematic evaluations and management responses (item 6)

312. The Executive Board had before it three evaluation reports and the accompanying management responses, all of which had been made available on the UNICEF website: (a) evaluation of the UNICEF cluster lead agency role in humanitarian action; (b) evaluation of UNICEF programmes to protect children in emergencies; and (c) 'Learning from Nutrition Programme Evaluations: A Thematic Evaluation Synthesis Report'. Following introductory remarks by the Deputy Executive Director, Management, the Director, Evaluation, presented the reports. The management responses were presented by the Director of the Office of Emergency Programmes and the Director, Programmes.

313. A group of delegations welcomed the actions taken by UNICEF to meet the gaps identified by the evaluations, including through plans, programmes and resource allocation. They underlined the importance of making these evaluations and the actions taken to respond to the recommendations well known within the entire organization. Another supported further strengthening of the evaluation function so the results could be used to improve planning processes, programme

development and the allocation of resources in the context of introducing specific results-based management systems. It was also suggested that the Board receive information on the implementation of the recommendations of global thematic evaluations on an annual basis.

314. The first two evaluations were not explicit enough on the positive impact of the cluster lead approach and child protection programming in emergencies had on the beneficiaries and on strengthening national capacities, according to two delegations.

315. Concerning the evaluation of the UNICEF cluster lead agency role, a group of delegations said that the strategic plan and integrated results and resources framework better reflected the importance of UNICEF as a humanitarian actor with cluster lead responsibilities as well as long-term engagement during reconstruction. They encouraged UNICEF to further strengthen these aspects in the agreed midterm review of the framework.

316. A delegation said that indicators for each cluster, including for nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, child protection and gender violence, should reflect the concrete contribution of UNICEF to developing countries' programmes. The speaker underscored the need to provide humanitarian assistance based solely on an impartial and non-political approach.

317. Many delegations expressed concern about "cluster mission creep", which was negatively impacting the ability of UNICEF to carry out its role as cluster lead agency. Coordination efforts, whether for clusters or sectors, were not an end in themselves and should always lead to the improvement of assistance and service delivery for beneficiaries. Cluster mission creep stretched resources by spreading efforts. There were no clear established priorities based on risk assessment, which limited the ability of global clusters to provide high-quality support. The speakers expressed support for the report's recommendation to mitigate the use of clusters in inappropriate scenarios by developing models and tools for normal cluster coordination and establishing clarity on the role of clusters to ensure efficient and fit-for-purpose coordination approaches.

318. Delegations expressed appreciation for the UNICEF contribution to the collective humanitarian response and the initiative to increase country office preparedness for cluster activation in high-risk countries. Incentives that rewarded collective response should be created. The location by UNICEF of all cluster leads in Geneva contributed to better coordination of humanitarian assistance.

319. Delegations welcomed the nomination by UNICEF of high-calibre candidates for the humanitarian coordinator pool in the 2014 round and congratulated UNICEF for having had the highest pass rate per agency. They encouraged further strengthening and development of key humanitarian partnerships, in particular with Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR and WFP, including joint missions and needs assessments. They also encouraged UNICEF to support the early inclusion of UN-Women as a standing invitee of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

320. Speakers welcomed that UNICEF planned to improve its reporting on results and results-based management of humanitarian action across the organization, including the use of sex- and age-disaggregated data. They urged UNICEF to improve the reporting on regular resources allocated to humanitarian support.

321. Strengthening capacity in education was not as high a priority as in water, sanitation and hygiene, and nutrition was a concern to some delegations. UNICEF was encouraged to continue to scale up capacity-building of education staff.

322. A number of delegations addressed the evaluation of the UNICEF cluster lead agency role in humanitarian action during their statements following the opening of the session. They said that UNICEF was seen by partners as effective in its country cluster coordination. UNICEF was taking seriously the recommendations to address gaps and ensure that the actions taken were widely understood throughout the organization. A delegation expressed concern about the prevalence of gender-based violence in the humanitarian context and its strong support for UNICEF and UNFPA co-leading the gender-based violence subcluster. UNICEF was commended for its work to improve its global leadership of the clusters, including the establishment of the Global Cluster Coordination Unit.

323. On the evaluation of child protection in emergencies, a group of delegations expressed support for UNICEF actions in this area, including through inter-agency human-rights-based advocacy in all contexts and needs assessments based on the different needs of girls, boys, women and men.

324. UNICEF was urged to put more effort into preventive measures, including strengthening efforts to apply the child protection strategy in fragile and conflict-affected States, developing inter-agency human rights based-advocacy and engaging with the rule of law and security sector agenda in fragile and conflict-affected States. Delegations requested information on how the recent study on integrated programming in humanitarian action and the future global strategy on resilience would be implemented in the framework of child protection in emergencies. It was also stated that the planned comprehensive child protection fundraising strategy should be developed in the context of the structured dialogue on financing and the strategic plan.

325. UNICEF was urged to continue to improve its monitoring and reporting of grave violations against children and working to prevent violence, as well as the weak data for case management, which prevented the agency from demonstrating outcomes. Delegations emphasized the importance of actions to prevent and respond to gender-based violence across all humanitarian sectors, and the necessity to promote long-term strategies for social change to address underlying causes of gender-based violence as outlined in the management response.

326. A speaker expressed appreciation for the achievements of UNICEF in protecting children in emergency situations, including in helping to reunite children and parents, give them psychological assistance, combat the recruitment of children into armed gangs and report on mine hazards in emergency situations.

327. The representative of Colombia, which was the focus of one of the case studies for the evaluation, expressed appreciation for the report's highlighting of government efforts to meet the needs of boys, girls and adolescents in emergency situations. Because the evaluation only went up to 2012, some of the more recent progress had not been documented. In recent years, Colombia had strengthened relevant national institutions, including the creation of a special unit for attention and integral reparation of victims, the unit of restitution of lands and the national unit for the management of natural disasters. Although a middle-income country,

Colombia faced enormous social challenges and required additional financing from donors for the protection of children.

328. In a statement made at the opening of the session, it was said that the evaluation of programmes to protect children in emergencies had found that funding shortages had led to cuts in funding in some areas, including services to survivors of sexual violence. Data and case management on serious violations beyond child recruitment had been weak. However, UNICEF-supported psychosocial services had led to significant improvement in aspects of children's well-being.

329. A group of delegations welcomed the meta-evaluation on nutrition and associated management response, as well as the recent evaluation of community-based management of acute malnutrition that was discussed at the annual session and the global thematic evaluation of UNICEF work to reduce stunting, scheduled for 2015. UNICEF was a key partner for countries when developing nutrition policy standards and programmes and as such, it was important that UNICEF continue to invest in such evaluations to ensure that its work was of the highest quality.

330. The group expressed concern that the evaluation had identified several instances of poor programme design, weaknesses in understanding of causal factors and frequent absence of a coherent package of interventions. A number of observations were related to weak programme sustainability, many to investments in institutional capacity and reliance on external funding and procurement.

331. While a net evaluation was unable to comment on why weaknesses and data design, technical assistance and coordination occurred, one factor could be the short timeframe in which programmes were planned and funded. Investing in capacity and institutions took time and there was a need for more or longer-term funding for nutrition.

332. The delegations welcomed the recommendations and management response covering a stronger results-based management focus, more attention to learning from evaluations and increased focus on capacity-building. In order to ensure sufficient implementation of the management response, it must be owned and followed up by the entire organization. In that regard, only 17 per cent of the actions agreed through management responses during the period 2009 to 2013 had been completed within the agreed time frame of one year. They urged UNICEF to continue to strengthen its response to evaluation findings in order to maximize learning and effectiveness.

333. Only 9 of 49 evaluations covered humanitarian settings despite a high investment in that area, and several countries with high burdens of undernutrition had not conducted any evaluations or nutrition interventions in recent years. The number of evaluations conducted in the area of nutrition according to the evaluation policy is low compared to the over 100 countries where UNICEF had nutrition programmes.

334. The delegations emphasized the need for UNICEF to closely monitor what was working in nutrition programming and what changes were needed to its approach. It might be useful to consider some further joint evaluations with other donors and governments in those countries in order to share learning outside of UNICEF.

335. Another delegation said that because this was a key area of UNICEF work, it favoured regular reporting to the Executive Board on the results of the evaluations

carried out in this area, the problems identified and the steps taken as a result of the evaluations.

E. Private fundraising: financial report for the year ended 31 December 2013 (item 7)

336. Following introductory remarks by the Deputy Executive Director, External Affairs, the Director, Private Fundraising and Partnerships, presented the report (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.6).

337. A group of delegations praised the strong results reported for 2013, when private fundraising revenue reached $1.26 million, a 25 per cent rise from the previous year. The increase came from various sources, including the soaring earmarked resources for emergencies and the good performance of monthly donations due to an increase in the number of individual donors. They noted the decrease in revenues from the sale of cards and products and expressed appreciation for efforts to streamline expenses related to those activities. They welcomed the positive contribution of the investment funds implemented by UNICEF and asked to be kept updated on the evolution of this source of revenue and its actual generated return.

338. UNICEF could rely on real added value from its relationship with the private sector. The network of National Committees was accountable for 90 per cent of UNICEF private sector revenue. As part of its resource mobilization strategy, UNICEF should broaden its private donor base, given that private sector resources, which for the first time in 2013 exceeded governmental contributions for regular sources, would indeed play an increasing role in the organization's financing structure.

339. It was crucial to continue guaranteeing the quality of resources from the private sector, which must be fully aligned with the outcomes of the strategic plan 2014-2017, and, as far as possible, oriented to regular resources. Forty per cent had been dedicated to regular resources in 2013, and UNICEF should continue mobilizing its partners to increase this share. This increasing financial support from the private sector should inform the structured dialogue on the UNICEF financing structure.

340. Another group of delegations said that because private fundraising constituted a very important part of UNICEF revenue, it was important that the Board be given sufficient information regarding these activities. It was encouraging to see improved reporting.

341. The delegations commended the National Committees and UNICEF for using new and innovative ways of mobilizing funds from private sources, such as pledging through SMS. They also encouraged UNICEF and the Committees to explore how the latter could raise funds for other flexible resources, such as thematic funding. The National Committees deserved recognition for their ability to mobilize such a valuable contribution to UNICEF. Their outreach activities and communication with the public constituted a supportive environment that was unique for development cooperation.

342. The representative of the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF said that the Committees were proud to share in the many achievements of UNICEF

in 2013, especially their contribution to the private sector partnerships strategic plan and the outstanding results achieved in the Private Sector Fundraising and Partnerships Division. The Committees had for many years invested in innovative ways of advocating for children. In 2013, their total digital income was $172 million dollars, an increase of 22 per cent compared to 2012. They had tremendous support from 4.5 million social media followers, an increase of 43 per cent since 2012. On Facebook alone, they had over 1.5 million subscribers and in 2013, their websites were visited over 30 million times.

343. The National Committees had reached these accomplishments while implementing rigorous measures to improve their individual and collective performance and results for children. Not only did they increase their total contribution to UNICEF, but also increased their contribution rate, collectively reaching a contribution rate of 76 per cent in 2013.

344. It was critical that members of the UNICEF family have a clear understanding of what a National Committee is, how they function, what they are guided by and how they measure their success. In the past two years, the Committees had become more efficient, more effective and more innovative. They had established strong partnerships and gathered constituencies around common causes, and their collaboration with UNICEF had never been more fruitful.

F. UNICEF strategic plan: updated financial estimates 2014-2017 (item 8)

345. The report (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.5) was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director, Management, followed by a presentation by the Acting Comptroller.

346. The Executive Board adopted decision 2014/17 (see annex III).

G. Reports of the Executive Board field visits (item 9)

Visit of the Bureau to Burkina Faso, 26 April-2 May 2014

347. After a video presentation, the report (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.25) was presented by the head of the delegation, H.E. Mr. Stephan Tafrov, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Executive Board. He said that the visit allowed the Bureau members to gain first-hand knowledge of UNICEF work at the country level and to better understand the challenges facing women and children in Burkina Faso, including access to health care, education, protection, water, hygiene and sanitation services.

348. The Bureau members noted with deep concern that child labour in gold mines remained a major problem in Burkina Faso and commended UNICEF efforts in that regard. Despite being legally banned, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) was still widespread, affecting 75 per cent of the country's girls. The existing high-level political commitment by the Government should be galvanized to build a broad-based movement to end FGM/C, child marriage and related discriminative practices in the next generation. Malnutrition continued to be a major concern and there were approximately 35,000 Malian refugees in Burkina Faso. The Bureau noted the positive cooperation among United Nations agencies and encouraged their

coordinated efforts under the framework of Delivering as One. It was evident that UNICEF had taken a very strong position in terms of protecting children and their rights and was positively cooperating with the authorities in the country.

Visit of members of the Executive Board to the Sudan, 26 April-2 May 2014

349. Following a video presentation, the report (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.26) was introduced by the head of the delegation, H.E. Mr. Ferit Hoxha, Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations. He said the political and security context in the Sudan was complex. Children under age 18 constituted half of the estimated population of 37.3 million. Despite efforts and some progress, the Sudan still had much to do to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. A firm and stronger commitment by the Government to put children at the heart of the national development agenda was crucial. A national dialogue has been initiated by the President. The delegation firmly believed that the country needed a committed, vigorously pursued and all-inclusive national dialogue. The fundamental call heard by the delegation in meeting with children, parents, social workers, citizens or civil society was that the war must stop.

350. The UNICEF humanitarian operation in the Sudan was one of the largest in the world. The delegation had visited Zam Zam camp in El Fasher where 40,000 internally displaced persons, most of whom had been there for more than a decade, lived in deplorable conditions. In order to implement programmes and have sustainable impact, immediate, unhindered access to the people in need was essential. For three years, UNICEF has been without access to significant population segments in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, and obtaining travel and access permits for internally displaced person camps in other locations was met with delays and difficulties. Malnutrition in the Sudan was an issue of great concern and was more a consequence of underdevelopment. A major challenge faced by UNICEF was the flexibility of funds to allow local purchases in country.

351. The delegation was impressed with the innovative and multifaceted approach and involvement of stakeholders in the FGM/C "Saleema" campaign, but highlighted the need for more support for the campaign at the federal level. The delegation was pleased that the Sudan had made remarkable progress towards achieving universal primary education and Education for All. In the area of child protection, the enactment of the Federal Act in 2010 was a milestone, aligning domestic legislation with the Convention of the Rights of Child. However, national legislation and judicial practice regarding the definition of a child were inconsistent with the Convention and the act did not criminalize FGM/C.

352. The delegation had been pleased to meet with a number of youth organizations, but discovered a landscape that was fragmented, with no clear platform for youth participation. The delegation was encouraged by the equity approach applied by UNICEF to address the needs of out-of-school adolescents by providing life skills based on alternative learning programmes, but noted the limited resources available for this crucial sector.

353. The representative of the Sudan said that his Government had ratified international instruments on children and adopted local legislation. Ending the conflicts would require rebel parties to engage in negotiations. The root causes of children missing school or joining the armed forces must be addressed, including poverty, climate change, unilateral economic sanctions, debt and the need for

technical assistance and capacity-building in education and health. Any action relating to children and armed conflict must involve the Government and be based on transparency and respect for national sovereignty. UNICEF programmes in the Sudan should move towards recovery and be harmonized with national priorities and ownership.

Joint visit to Panama and El Salvador by members of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, 23 March-1 April 2014

354. The report (DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2014/CRP.8) was introduced by H.E. Mr. Sahebzada Khan, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations. He said that the visit to Panama was very short but the interaction at the UNICEF regional office was productive, and the delegation was able to see how the regional team worked around the region. The major portion of the visit was in El Salvador, where the delegation saw extraordinary support by the Government for the United Nations system.

355. The delegation found that Delivering as One in El Salvador was still a work in progress and had advised the United Nations country team to make best use of the upcoming review of the UNDAF to harmonize the programme, particularly in relation to the joint work programme, the common budgetary framework and the common reporting system for results. Members were happy to see the significant United Nations contribution to institutional capacity-building.

356. With regard to gender equality and women's empowerment, the delegation advised the country team to continue its focus on youth and children, especially because education, skills development and a culture of peace had evolved in recent years. Concerning the interaction between the country team, civil society and NGOs, the delegation was pleased to see how well the United Nations worked with the NGOs delivering projects. The delegation recommended that an integrated strategy mechanism be developed to incorporate all elements of response, recovery, involvement of community organizations and women, etc. into disaster risk management. Food security, nutrition and sustainable agricultural development were extremely important in El Salvador, and the country team was involved in advocacy and capacity-building in those areas, with UNICEF specifically working on combating malnutrition.

357. The representative of El Salvador said that the visit had shown the challenges faced by countries classified as middle-income. His Government had mentioned on several occasions that the current method to classify middle-income countries, which was based only on macroeconomic indicators, was inadequate and did not reflect the huge challenges facing the region. The visit had shown the actions of the Government to tackle those challenges. Participants had been able to appreciate the work done by the Government and country team within the framework of Delivering as One. It was particularly important to closely monitor the implications, challenges, costs and savings involved. Countries like El Salvador that were "self-starters" for Delivering as One needed consistent funding. In El Salvador, the model had been designed to be as least costly as possible, with an emphasis on joint programming, but this required funding either from Member States or the regular resources of each agency.

358. The representative of Panama said that despite his country's classification as middle-income, it faced major challenges. The main one was the economic

inequality that affected many boys, girls and adolescents, especially in rural areas or among indigenous groups and those of African descent. The Government had adopted a more social approach with a programme entitled "The People First", which reiterated the work of the various development agencies and programmes in Panama, particularly UNICEF, to promote and protect the rights of boys and girls and to satisfy their basic needs.

H. Other matters (item 10)

359. The Executive Board adopted the following text:

Statement of the UNICEF Executive Board on the Ebola outbreak

The Executive Board of UNICEF, at its second regular session of 2014, expresses its deep concern at the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Board notes, with concern, the impact of the disease on the most vulnerable, particularly children and their families, and pledges support and solidarity for all those affected by this serious and escalating health emergency.

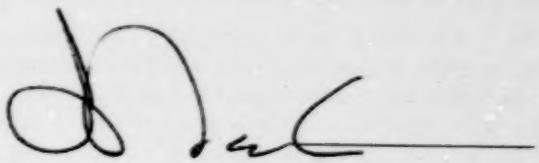
The Board salutes the heroic efforts by national and international health workers, community volunteers and staff from national health authorities, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, who are working tirelessly to save lives and stop the spread of the virus.

As underlined by the President of the Executive Board, the UNICEF Executive Director and numerous Member States in their statements at the Board's second regular session, the world is facing a number of unprecedented humanitarian emergencies, including crises in the Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, in addition to the Ebola outbreak. The number of people who have died from the Ebola virus is growing by the day. Many more have been affected by the disease, as countries struggle to contain the outbreak in the most difficult of circumstances. The capacities of already weak health systems are being stretched to near breaking point, while nutrition, protection and other social services systems are severely challenged. Education systems and immunization campaigns have also been disrupted. Moreover, it is clear that the Ebola outbreak will have severe implications on the economies in the region.

It is vital that the international community support the Governments and peoples in the affected countries at this time, just as it responds to the many other humanitarian crises now affecting children around the globe. In the fight against Ebola, as well as in the humanitarian response to the crises in the Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and elsewhere, the first priority must be to protect the most vulnerable, who are often children and women. To do that, the international community must increase the level of its collective response, mobilizing adequate support to the work being carried out by UNICEF and its partners on the ground, in coordination with the World Health Organization.

The Executive Board again expresses its solidarity with all who have been affected by this crisis, and underscores its appreciation for all those responding from around the world to tackle this deadly virus and end the suffering it is causing.

11 September 2014



Signed by the President of the Executive Board of UNICEF,
H.E. Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya

Provisional list of agenda items for 2015 first regular session of the Executive Board

360. The Secretary of the Executive Board presented the provisional list of agenda items for the 2015 first regular session of the Executive Board, scheduled to take place from 3 to 6 February 2015.

I. Adoption of draft decisions (item 11)

361. The Executive Board adopted decisions 2014/15 to 2014/18 (see annex III).

J. Closing statements (item 12)

362. The Executive Director said that in reviewing the work of the last few days, he found that two issues stood out. The first was the discussion on the Ebola virus outbreak and the growing scope and urgency of emergencies, and the way these crises were stressing the entire organization. The second was the discussions of the universality of the UNICEF mission, as reflected in the structured dialogue, particular with regard to middle-income countries. That issue had been apparent during the discussion on the country programmes, many of which were for countries in Latin America, and during an informal discussion on institutionalization of children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Such discussions demonstrated the universality of UNICEF and showed how it continued to remain engaged in these regions as well as in other areas of the world.

363. The discussions on humanitarian action and development and on management reform had made clear that it would be increasingly difficult for UNICEF to meet all aspects of its mission in the light of the increasing demands posed by emergencies. It would be challenging, but he had absolutely no doubt that UNICEF would so. All UNICEF staff were heartened by the support and guidance of the Executive Board.

364. He thanked the outgoing President, H.E. Ambassador Macharia Kamau, for his exemplary leadership throughout the year.

365. The President said that during this session members of the Board had again clearly reaffirmed the role of UNICEF and the importance of its mandate in reaching children and their families, particularly the most vulnerable. The Board

fully supported the Executive Director's call for a renewed commitment to children during the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF must continue to champion equitable outcomes for all children by investing in new technologies and seeking new partnerships and new ways of doing business. UNICEF must continue reinventing and reinvigorating itself as the demands on the organization increased.

366. The Board had been particularly interested to learn how UNICEF was ramping up its effort to stem the spread of Ebola. Members were now acutely aware of the potentially disastrous consequences of the disease not only for the infected but also for their families and many societies across West Africa, the entire region and perhaps even across the globe. He emphasized the imperative of immediately implementing a rapid, massive and concerted response to the epidemic.

Annex I

Special focus session on partners for change and development: the growing partnership between the European Union and UNICEF

1. In his presentation, the guest speaker, the European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, praised UNICEF for its work to uphold the rights of every child. That work included critical support for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, an urgent priority for both UNICEF and the European Union.

2. He said that the launch of the Goals in 2000 had helped to place children at the centre of international development assistance. They had galvanized unprecedented national commitment and international support towards a set of goals focused mainly on children, women and those most deprived and vulnerable.

3. The European Union and its member States were the main partner of UNICEF, contributing more than half of all the government funding of the organization. The European Union worked with UNICEF in many key areas, including humanitarian action and global initiatives and movements such as Every Woman, Every Child, Scaling Up Nutrition and the Global Education Partnership.

4. The European Union was committed to the vision of creating a better world for every man, woman and child by 2030. The financial and technological resources existed to do that, what were needed were political courage and determination.

5. Stressing that the rights and security of children are close to everyone's heart, he said that the post-2015 framework should be grounded on five key objectives: (a) securing commitment from all to ensure that every person on the planet — with a focus on children — has decent education and health care, nutritious food and clean water and air; (b) providing access to energy, infrastructure and telecommunication, which are the drivers of growth; (c) upholding environmental sustainability; (d) focusing on children's rights, good governance, the rule of law, gender equality and women's empowerment as political, moral and economic imperatives; and (e) taking action on peace and security to reduce conflict, which perpetuates poverty. The framework needed to emphasize the protection of children, an area left out of the Millennium Development Goals, with a focus on reducing the number of children affected by violence.

6. Delegations welcomed the comments of the Commissioner and praised the support given by the European Union to children in many countries, including through humanitarian action. A number of speakers supported the Commissioner's emphasis on addressing the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals in the post-2015 framework, citing specific examples of achievement of the Goals from their countries. Many agreed that the post-2015 framework should emphasize protecting children from every form of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, especially in humanitarian situations. It was noted by one speaker that a gender perspective was crucial in this regard.

7. One group of delegations emphasized the strong correlation between poverty and child abuse and exploitation, saying that battling poverty would reduce such incidences. The group called for greater investment in building and strengthening child protection systems and capacities. UNICEF alone would not have the resources to address the gaps in achievement of the Goals; partnerships were key.

8. The Commissioner thanked the delegations for their kind and supportive remarks. In response to a question on measuring results, he said the European Commission was working on a development and cooperation results framework regarding poverty eradication, maternal health and other goals, with a view to integrating it into the global framework for post-2015. He agreed on the importance of South-South, North-South and other forms of cooperation to development, which had been mentioned by several delegations.

9. Responding to the comments of two delegations on the need for sustaining action on polio eradication, the Commissioner said that polio eradication and registration of children offered good examples of the need to spend adequate resources to reach targets, no matter how small or large the number of people who needed to be reached.

10. He praised UNICEF for being one of the most respected and admired players in the development field and reported that the European Union would give 326 million euros from its One Billion Euro initiative to UNICEF to implement accelerated efforts on the most off-track Millennium Development Goals.

Annex II

Special focus session on sustainability and development in Africa: a child-centred perspective

1. The session was opened by the President of the Executive Board, who thereafter invited the African Union Commissioner for Social Affairs to speak. The Commissioner spoke of the challenges facing Africa's children, particularly in the areas of nutrition and education, and the importance of collaboration between the African Union and UNICEF. The partnership between the two institutions includes a campaign to end child marriage, social protection, stunting and malnutrition, protection of children in conflict situations and birth registration. Areas where UNICEF could work more closely with the African Union include utilizing the presence of UNICEF in all countries in Africa to continue the follow-up on implementation of African Union resolutions; increased technical collaboration, including on evidence-based policy advocacy; predictable, multi-year funding support for the African Union; and support by UNICEF for the African Union Agenda 2063.

2. After a short video on children in Africa, the Director of Programme Division made a presentation in which he said that some of the organization's largest country programmes were in Africa, where UNICEF currently invests more than $2 billion per year, approximately 53 per cent of programme expenditure. Approximately one fourth of UNICEF investment in Africa has been for emergency operations.

3. The Executive Director of the African Child Policy Forum said that the success of the post-2015 development framework in Africa would depend on how effectively Governments empowered children and communities to demand results in key areas: investing more in programmes and interventions benefiting children; enhancing and building capacities and systems to efficiently and effectively deliver on commitments to children; and strengthening protection of children against abuse and exploitation.

4. The discussion featured interventions by a number of high-level representatives of African Governments. Several African delegations discussed successful measures their Governments had taken to promote the rights of children. Many speakers stressed that despite so much progress in several areas, challenges and problems remained, such as in child survival, education, water and sanitation, malnutrition and overall poverty, compounded by the lack of institutional capacities, basic infrastructure, resources and information and by deep-rooted harmful traditional practices. Under-five mortality in Africa remained the highest in the world. More than 3 million African children under age 15 years were living with HIV, and the continent has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world. Humanitarian crises, armed conflict and political instability also hindered efforts to protect the rights and welfare of children.

5. Efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and other international goals have showed that significant progress could be made when concrete benchmarks are set and conditions for change are favourable. Indicators for child mortality, access to drinking water and sanitation and school enrolment clearly showed improvements in peoples' quality of life. Africa is the world's youngest continent, with 40 per cent of the population under the age of 15 years and another 200 million youths aged 15-24 years. It is also one of the most dynamic continents,

home to 6 of the world's 10 fastest-growing economies. These factors offer a unique opportunity to accelerate long-term development results, including by ensuring complementary investments in education, health and fighting child labour. International cooperation was the key starting point, particularly in terms of strong collaboration between the United Nations system and the African Union in supporting Member States as the primary duty bearers to fulfil their obligations to children. South-South cooperation was also critical.

6. Several speakers stated that African leadership would be the key predictor of success, and that it was important to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda give special attention to the situation of African children. Priorities must include increased investment in social protection to reduce inequality and facilitate access of the most vulnerable people to basic social services; investment in children at the community level and in early childhood development; and enhanced communication for development to change mind sets in communities.

7. Several delegations stressed the particular importance of investing in girls' education and adolescent girls, ending child marriage, fighting HIV/AIDS, advancing realization of sexual and reproductive health rights and ending female genital mutilation/cutting.

8. In closing the focus session, the President said that the gap between Africa and the rest of the world must be addressed in a forceful and transparent manner. The proposed sustainable development goals should include targets to end childhood plagues and killers including malaria, HIV/AIDS and hunger. He argued that there was no reason as to why Africa should be left behind on these very basic deliverables. He urged UNICEF to become the champion of those targets and goals as part of the post-2015 development agenda.

Annex III

Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2014

First regular session

2014/1
Modifications to procedures for consideration and approval of country programme documentation

The Executive Board

1. *Endorses* the proposed modification to the procedures for consideration and approval of country programme documentation (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.1), subject to the provisions of this decision;

2. *Welcomes* the continued efforts made by the members of the United Nations Development Group towards further harmonizing and streamlining programming instruments and processes in support of country programmes of cooperation, in line with the recommendations of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

3. *Stresses* that the programming process for UNICEF cooperation should continue to emphasize national ownership;

4. *Also stresses* the important role of the Executive Board in the review and approval of country programme documents;

5. *Requests* UNICEF to ensure a transparent and timely consultation process with the Executive Board, to provide sufficient time for discussion, and to ensure that all comments and recommendations made by Member States with regard to the draft country programme documents be made available to Executive Board members prior to formal consideration of the country programme documents;

6. *Requests* that country programme documents continue to be developed on the basis of national plans and priorities under the leadership of national governments and in consultation with the resident coordinator and other members of the United Nations country team, as well as with other relevant stakeholders at country level, in full alignment with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), where applicable, and with the strategic plan of UNICEF;

7. *Requests* UNICEF, in line with the recommendations of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, to further simplify, harmonize and reduce the number of its agency-specific country programming instruments and processes, wherever possible, in particular in 'delivering as one' countries and countries deciding to apply the standard operating procedures;

8. *Encourages* UNICEF to continue to work with UNDP and UNFPA to further harmonize their country programme document templates, associated documentation and annexes;

9. *Requests* UNICEF to include the following elements in the country programme document, associated documentation and annexes:

(a) An indicative budget showing the expected use of regular and other resources;

(b) A results and resources framework;

(c) Information on how the results, as reflected in the results and resources framework, relate to the strategic plan and the organization-wide results framework, to national priorities, and, as applicable, to the UNDAF;

(d) A costed evaluation plan;

(e) A statement of accountability for programme results;

10. *Requests* UNICEF to ensure that the results and resources frameworks are an integral part of country programme documents and to translate them accordingly;

11. *Recalls* the importance of strictly observing the resolutions and rules, such as General Assembly resolution 67/292, establishing language arrangements for the different bodies and organs of the United Nations.

First regular session
6 February 2014

2014/2
Costed UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2013/9 on the report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2013/12), requesting UNICEF to (a) develop a new Gender Equality Action Plan, 2014-2017, and in doing so, to address each of the challenges identified in the report, such as technical capacity, expertise and resource allocation for gender equality, (b) develop a performance management plan that includes a results framework, and a plan for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and (c) cost and allocate adequate funds for the new Gender Equality Action Plan, 2014-2017;

2. *Also recalls* its decision 2013/20 on the UNICEF integrated budget, 2014-2017, reiterating its request to UNICEF to develop a costed Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2017, which would include a comprehensive gender analysis to further strengthen gender mainstreaming in the organization in support of the implementation of the strategic plan;

3. *Welcomes* the "Update on progress on a costed gender action plan" (document E/ICEF/2014/CRP.5) and the other preparatory and drafting work, and ongoing consultations to develop the costed Gender Equality Action Plan, 2014-2017;

4. *Encourages* UNICEF to continue to consult the Executive Board and the other relevant stakeholders and partners with a view to finalizing the costed Gender Equality Action Plan, 2014-2017, by mid-April 2014, for its presentation for information to the Executive Board at its annual session of 2014, together with the annual report on the progress of work in gender equality in UNICEF.

First regular session
6 February 2014

2014/3
UNICEF annual financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2012 and report of the Board of Auditors

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the reports A/68/5/Add.2, A/68/381 and A/68/350;

2. *Notes* the unqualified audit opinion issued by the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2012;

3. *Supports* ongoing UNICEF management efforts in implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the year ended 31 December 2012, including the timely implementation of any outstanding recommendations;

4. *Requests* UNICEF to continue strengthening core business practices and internal controls, as well as monitoring and oversight of implementing partners;

5. *Encourages* UNICEF to continue strengthening the monitoring and oversight of the implementation of its cooperation agreements with National Committees for UNICEF;

6. *Also encourages* UNICEF to prioritize the finalization of the revised framework for the harmonized approach to cash transfers, in coordination with other members of the United Nations Development Group, and to ensure improved oversight when the revised framework is implemented.

First regular session
6 February 2014

2014/4
Private fundraising: 2014 workplan and proposed budget

A. Private Fundraising and Partnerships budgeted expenses for 2014 fiscal year

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* for the fiscal year 2014 (1 January to 31 December) budgeted expenses of $109 million, as detailed in the table below.

	(in millions of United States dollars)
Investment funds	49.0
Other private sector fundraising costs	60.0
Total special purpose expenses	**109.0**

2. *Notes* that $19.4 million in Private Fundraising and Partnerships development effectiveness costs and management costs were approved in the UNICEF integrated budget, 2014-2017 submission (E/ICEF/2013/AB/L.4);

3. *Authorizes* UNICEF

(a) To incur expenses, as summarized in column II of table 3 of document E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.1, and to decrease or increase expenses, up to the levels indicated in columns I and III of the same table, should the apparent revenue from fundraising or cards and products sales decrease or increase to the levels indicated in columns I and III;

(b) To redeploy resources between the various budget lines (as detailed in paragraph 1 above), up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 2014 approved workplan;

4. *Requests* UNICEF

(a) To provide updates to the Executive Board, with information and data, on the use of investment funds, and the returns generated thereof;

(b) To continue to ensure effective management of the relationship with National Committees for UNICEF, with a particular focus on monitoring compliance with the Cooperation Agreement.

B. Budgeted revenue for the year 2014

The Executive Board

Notes that, for the period 1 January to 31 December 2014, Private Fundraising and Partnerships revenue is budgeted at $1,137 million, as shown in column II of table 3 in document E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.1.

C. Policy issues

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* allocation of investment funds, amounting to $49 million for 2014;

2. *Further approves* an interim one-month allocation for January 2015 of $13.14 million, to be absorbed in the annual Private Fundraising and Partnerships budget for 2015.

First regular session
6 February 2014

Annual session

2014/5
Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: performance and results for 2013, including report on implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF: performance and results for 2013, including report on implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (E/ICEF/2014/6 and E/ICEF/2014/6/Add.1);

2. *Decides* to transmit the above-mentioned report to the Economic and Social Council, along with a summary of the comments and guidance provided by delegations at the present session.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/6
Final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2013/16 on the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017;

2. *Notes with appreciation* the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2014/8), which provides results and key performance indicators at the impact, outcome and output levels, and includes baselines and targets, for the strategic plan;

3. *Affirms* that the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017, has been designed in conformity with results-based management principles, with each level of results directly or indirectly related to UNICEF programmes and with expected results and targets determined on the basis of country programmes or internationally agreed commitments;

4. *Notes* that the exact formulation of the indicators, milestones and targets of the final results framework will continue to evolve and should, where appropriate, be further refined in consultation with Member States, and requests an update to the Executive Board at its annual session of 2015;

5. *Requests* UNICEF to update the Executive Board at its annual session of 2015 on how country programme results and resources frameworks are aligned with the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017;

6. *Notes* that a comprehensive analysis of the risks, assumptions and mitigation measures, as well as the elements of the theory of change of each outcome area, has been outlined in a supplementary programme note (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.14), which is publicly available and will be periodically refined;

7. *Requests* UNICEF to present to the Executive Board, at an informal session in September 2014, an outline of the format of, and the information that will

be provided in, the annual report of the Executive Director, to be based on the final results framework (E/ICEF/2014/8), which will allow for appropriate tracking of annual progress, in consultation with Member States, as well as expenditure compared to budgets;

8. *Also requests* UNICEF, as part of the annual report of the Executive Director, to provide an annual update on progress made towards achieving the results identified in the final results framework of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/7
Extensions of ongoing country programmes

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the one-year extensions of country programmes approved by the Executive Director for the country programmes for Algeria, Argentina, Lebanon, Libya and Uganda, as indicated in table 1 to document E/ICEF/2014/P/L.11;

2. *Approves* the two-year extension for Burundi, the third consecutive one-year extension for Guinea-Bissau, the fourth consecutive one-year extension for the Syrian Arab Republic, and a two-month extension, following three one-year extensions, for Madagascar, as indicated in table 2 to document E/ICEF/2014/P/L.11.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/8
Report on progress of work in gender equality and empowerment of women in UNICEF, and UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2013/9 on the report on the progress of gender equality work in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2013/12), requesting UNICEF to (a) develop a new Gender Equality Action Plan, 2014-2017, (b) develop a performance management plan that includes a results framework, and a plan for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and (c) cost and allocate adequate funds for the new Gender Equality Action Plan, 2014-2017;

2. *Also recalls* its decision 2013/20 on the UNICEF integrated budget, 2014-2017, reiterating its request to UNICEF to develop a costed Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2017;

3. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report on progress of work in gender equality and empowerment of women in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2014/10);

4. *Notes with appreciation* the consultative process of UNICEF in preparing the Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017;

5. *Welcomes* the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.12), including the four targeted gender priorities, the proposals for mainstreaming gender and addressing gender bottlenecks and barriers in programmes, and the proposals for increasing institutional effectiveness, including capacities and accountability, in the operationalization of the plan;

6. *Encourages* UNICEF to implement the plan in an effective and efficient manner, including by committing adequate resources and investing in the required staffing, capacity and systems, and stressing the importance of United Nations system-wide cooperation in its implementation;

7. *Requests* UNICEF to prepare annual reports on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, to be presented at annual sessions of the Executive Board, providing updates on both programmatic and institutional results, including updates on financial resources and expenditures, using the Gender Action Plan results matrix, indicators, and performance benchmarks, and also requests UNICEF to strengthen gender reporting in all of its work.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/9
Country programme document for Kenya

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2013/18 to consider, on an exceptional basis, the draft country programme document for Kenya at the first regular session of 2014 of the Executive Board, and to present the revised document for approval at the annual session of 2014;

2. *Also recalls* the request made by the Government of Kenya on 9 October 2013 to present the document for consideration and approval at the annual session of 2014;

3. *Further recalls* that the draft country programme document for Kenya (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.6) was circulated among Member States for their comments and inputs from 13 to 26 May 2014;

4. *Approves* the country programme document for Kenya, with the aggregate indicative budget of $54,640,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $124,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2014-2018.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/10
Annual report on the evaluation function and major evaluations in UNICEF

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on the evaluation function in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2014/12) and the accompanying paper providing a management perspective on the issues raised in the report;

2. *Reaffirms* the central role played by the evaluation function in UNICEF and the importance of the principles set out in the revised Evaluation Policy (E/ICEF/2013/14) prepared in close consultation with Member States;

3. *Welcomes* the evidence presented in the report of continued strengthening of the evaluation function and encourages UNICEF to continue to systematically apply the revised Evaluation Policy;

4. *Also welcomes* the increased commitment to the preparation of management responses to all major evaluations and encourages UNICEF to ensure the timely preparation and discussion of these responses, as well as better monitoring of the implementation of evaluation recommendations;

5. *Takes note* of the key performance indicators tracking the effectiveness of the evaluation system and the administrative data on human and financial resources;

6. *Welcomes* the progress on quality ratings of evaluations, encourages UNICEF to strive towards sustaining and further improving a high level of quality ratings, and also encourages UNICEF to strengthen appropriate consideration of cross-cutting issues in evaluations;

7. *Also welcomes* joint evaluations and encourages UNICEF to present to the Executive Board management responses to joint evaluations;

8. *Notes* the effective contribution of regional offices within the highly decentralized evaluation system of UNICEF;

9. *Requests* UNICEF to report in 2015 on steps taken to implement the revised Evaluation Policy and on implementation of the plan for global thematic evaluations, 2014-2017;

10. *Also requests* UNICEF to present to the Executive Board on an annual basis a comprehensive overview of evaluation coverage, including, inter alia, coverage by region, theme and programme expenditure level;

11. *Further requests* UNICEF to inform the Executive Board of the implementation of the plan for global thematic evaluations, as contained in document E/ICEF/2014/3, as part of the annual report on evaluation.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/11
Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2013 annual report to the Executive Board

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2013 annual report to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.2), the UNICEF management response to the annual report of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations for 2013 (E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.3) and the UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee 2013 annual report;

2. *Expresses* its continued support for the strengthening and resourcing of the internal audit and investigations function of UNICEF;

3. *Welcomes* the ongoing commitment of UNICEF to greater accountability and to the implementation of recommendations arising from its internal audits.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/12
Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF on its activities for 2013 (E/ICEF/2014/11) in compliance with Executive Board decision 2010/18 to present an annual report;

2. *Welcomes* the leadership of the Executive Director for his continued support and commitment to the work of the Ethics Office as evidenced by the progress demonstrated in this report;

3. *Notes with appreciation* the vital contributions made by the Ethics Office to foster a culture of ethics, integrity, and accountability at UNICEF, and urges the office to continue enhancing that culture;

4. *Recognizes* the actions taken by the Ethics Office to develop more systemic support to staff regarding conflicts of interest, and recognizes also the financial disclosure programme;

5. *Encourages* the Ethics Office to continue expanding its Ethics Training Programme to ensure it reaches all levels of staff, and requests the Ethics Office to continue using feedback on the training provided, as well as innovative approaches, to ensure that the training interventions continue to be effective and appropriate for all UNICEF personnel, including those in complex humanitarian situations, and also to ensure that the interventions represent a good investment of resources;

6. *Also encourages* the Ethics Office to continue its efforts in achieving coherence with other members of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations regarding the ethics policies, standards and practices of UNICEF;

7. *Requests* the Ethics Offices to improve protection for whistle-blowers by developing and implementing an effective policy on protection against retaliation that (a) specifies a statute of limitations of a minimum of six months for reporting retaliation, and (b) is in line with the management indicator on this issue included in the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017;

8. *Also requests* the Ethics Office to continue to submit annual reports to the Executive Board at future annual sessions, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2010/18, which should contain recommendations to management that will strengthen the organizational culture of integrity and compliance.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/13
Creation of a fourth position of Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director in UNICEF in the context of strengthened management for results across the organization

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the proposed organizational initiatives to strengthen leadership and management for results;

2. *Approves* the establishment of the position of Deputy Executive Director for field results at the level of Assistant Secretary-General;

3. *Requests* UNICEF to update the Executive Board ahead of the 2015 annual session on the structural and governance changes within UNICEF, including clarifying reporting lines, responsibilities and new accountabilities, and other effectiveness and efficiency initiatives as presented in document E/ICEF/2014/AB/L.4;

4. *Also requests* the Executive Director of UNICEF, in his 2015 annual report, to update the Executive Board on effectiveness and efficiency initiatives.

Annual session
6 June 2014

2014/14
Draft country programme documents

The Executive Board

Approves the aggregate indicative budgets for the following country and area programmes of cooperation:

Region country	*Period*	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Document E/ICEF/2014*
East Asia and the Pacific				
Timor-Leste	2015-2019	5 650 000	55 000 000	P/L.3
Eastern and Southern Africa				
Angola	2015-2019	32 467 500	76 000 000	P/L.4
Comoros	2015-2019	5 155 000	15 730 000	P/L.5
Kenya*	2014-2018			P/L.6
Latin America and the Caribbean				
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	2015-2019	4 270 000	10 000 000	P/L.2
Middle East and North Africa				
Palestinian children and women in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the State of Palestine	2015-2016	8 800 000	18 423 000	P/L.7
Tunisia	2015-2019	4 540 000	5 000 000	P/L.8
South Asia				
Afghanistan	2015-2019	210 000 000	455 500 000	P/L.9
West and Central Africa				
Sierra Leone	2015-2018	35 780 000	205 585 000	P/L.10

* See the separate decision on the country programme document for Kenya.

Annual session
6 June 2014

Second regular session

2014/15
Country programme documents

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* that the country programme documents, including aggregate indicative budgets, for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ecuador, Guatemala and Paraguay (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.12-E/ICEF/2014/P/L.15), were circulated among Member States for their comments and input from 16 June to 7 July 2014, in accordance with its decision 2014/1 on procedures for consideration and approval of country programme documentation;

2. *Approves* on a no-objection basis, and in accordance with decision 2014/1, the country programme documents, including aggregate indicative budgets, for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ecuador, Guatemala and Paraguay (E/ICEF/2014/P/L.12-E/ICEF/2014/P/L.15).

Second regular session
11 September 2014

2014/16
Proposed programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2015

The Executive Board

Adopts the programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2015 as a flexible framework subject to revisions as appropriate in the course of the year.

Joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP (2 February 2015)

First regular session 3-6 February 2015	*Annual session 16-19 June 2015*	*Second regular session 8-11 September 2015*
Organizational and procedural matters	**Organizational and procedural matters**	**Organizational and procedural matters**
Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Executive Board *(D)* (7 January 2015)[2]		Proposed programme of work for Executive Board sessions in 2016 *(D)*
Programme and policy matters	**Programme and policy matters**	**Programme and policy matters**
Programme cooperation:	Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF *(D)*	Programme cooperation:
Country programme documents *(D)*	UNICEF report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit[3] *(I)*	Country programme documents *(D)*
Extensions of ongoing country programmes *(D)*	Annual report on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan *(I)*	Extensions of ongoing country programmes *(D)*
Oral report on UNICEF follow-up to recommendations and decisions of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Programme Coordinating Board meetings *(I)*	Programme cooperation:	
Update on humanitarian action *(I)*	Country programme documents *(D)*	
	Extensions of ongoing country programmes *(D)*	
Evaluation, audit and oversight matters	**Evaluation, audit and oversight matters**	**Evaluation, audit and oversight matters**
Evaluation reports and management responses *(I)*:	Annual report on the evaluation function and major evaluations in UNICEF, and management perspective *(D)*	Evaluation reports and management responses *(I)*:
– Real-time evaluation of the response to Typhoon Haiyan (Philippines)	Evaluation report and management response *(I)*:	– Evaluation synthesis report

[2] This date is tentative.
[3] The report is considered under the agenda item, "Annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF".

First regular session 3-6 February 2015	*Annual session 16-19 June 2015*	*Second regular session 8-11 September 2015*
– Evaluation of upstream work in the education sector	– Formative evaluation of the MoRES approach	
	Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF *(I)*	
	Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2014 annual report to the Executive Board, and management response *(D)*	
	UNICEF Audit Advisory Committee annual report for 2014 *(I)*	
Resources, financial and budgetary matters	**Resources, financial and budgetary matters**	**Resources, financial and budgetary matters**
UNICEF annual financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2013 and report of the Board of Auditors *(I)*		Private fundraising: financial report for the year ended 31 December 2014 *(I)*
Private fundraising: 2015 workplan and proposed budget *(D)*		UNICEF strategic plan: updated financial estimates, 2015-2018 *(D)*
Pledging event		
Other matters	**Other matters**	**Other matters**
	Address by the Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff Association	
	Reports of the field visits of the Executive Board *(I)*	

The Executive Board considers two types of agenda items:

(i) *For decision (D)*: The Executive Board is expected to discuss and adopt a decision under the agenda item. The secretariat prepares official documentation and a draft decision for consideration by the Executive Board;

(ii) *For information (I)*: The secretariat prepares documentation for information at the request of the Executive Board. The secretariat does not prepare a draft decision, but the Executive Board may opt to take a decision under the agenda item.

Second regular session
11 September 2014

2014/17
Critical mass of core resources and UNICEF strategic plan: updated financial estimates 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the progress of funding the UNICEF reserve for staff liabilities;

2. *Recalls* its approval of the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2013/21), including the integrated results and resources framework, and reiterates its commitment to work with UNICEF to mobilize all required resources for its implementation;

3. *Requests* UNICEF to continue to improve its effectiveness and efficiency, including through the reduction of management costs and its ongoing Effectiveness and Efficiency initiative, and to further strengthen its transparency and accountability in an effort to strengthen development results and increase contributions from Member States;

4. *Notes* the importance of regular resources, which form the bedrock of the organization as they allow UNICEF to plan ahead, be strategic and responsive, strengthen accountability, transparency and oversight, advance United Nations coherence and coordination and provide predictable, differentiated services to respond to the needs of all children, particularly those in the poorest and most vulnerable programme countries;

5. *Urges* Member States to commit, as early as possible, contributions to UNICEF regular resources for 2014 and onwards, if possible through multi-year pledges;

6. *Notes* the important need to enhance the quality, predictability and alignment to the strategic plan of contributions to other resources, which comprise an important complement to the regular resource base, to be used for both development and humanitarian programming and the links between the two, in line with the universal mandate of UNICEF and in support to country-specific priorities;

7. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of UNICEF to broaden its donor base, including through new strategic partnerships with a wide range of partners and to mobilize additional resources and other forms of support from diversified sources;

8. *Notes* the common principles for the concept of critical mass of resources and core resources as developed by United Nations funds and programmes, and *further notes* the background paper related to implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development on "Financing the UNICEF strategic plan, 2014-2017" (E/ICEF/2014/CRP.27);

9. *Notes with appreciation* the consultative process with Member States regarding possible approaches to critical mass of core resources for UNICEF, as well as other resources that are more predictable, less restricted/earmarked and aligned to the outcomes of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, in line with General Assembly resolution 67/226 of 21 December 2012 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development;

10. *Welcomes* the work undertaken so far by UNICEF to develop a publicly accessible online platform for tracking results and resources, including increased visibility for contributors of core funding;

11. *Recalls* its decision 2013/5, and in this regard, encourages UNICEF, in the context of the planned review of the new cost-recovery methodology and the related rates in 2016, to propose adjustments, as required, for the consideration of the Executive Board that may strengthen the incentives for providing more predictable and less restricted/earmarked core and non-core funding;

12. *Requests* UNICEF, in consultation with the Executive Board, to continue to explore incentives, mechanisms and funding windows to broaden the donor base in a cost-effective manner and to encourage donors to increase their core contributions as well as to shift to less restricted/earmarked non-core funding, and in this regard *requests* UNICEF to present to the Executive Board a resource mobilization strategic brief towards this end for consideration at its second regular session of 2015;

13. *Decides* to organize, with the support of the UNICEF secretariat, on an annual basis during the second regular session of the Executive Board, a structured dialogue with Member States to monitor and follow up the predictability, flexibility and alignment of resources provided for the implementation of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, including information on funding gaps;

14. *Approves* the framework of the planned financial estimates for 2014-2017;

15. *Approves* the preparation of programme expenditure submissions to the Executive Board of up to $1,247 million from regular resources in 2015.

Second regular session
11 September 2014

2014/18
Extensions of ongoing country programmes

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the one-year extensions of the country programme for Iraq and of the common country programme for the United Republic of Tanzania, which were approved by the Executive Director, as indicated in table 1 of document E/ICEF/2014/P/L.16;

2. *Approves* the two-year extension of the country programme for Botswana, a two-month extension, following two one-year extensions, for Mali, and a nine-month extension following a two-year extension for Colombia as presented in table 2 of document E/ICEF/2014/P/L.16.

Second regular session
11 September 2014

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